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## LIST OF ERRATA

Page 1, 10th line from bottom. For **urolagina** read **urolagnia.**
Page 7, line 12. For **infatilism** read **infantilism.**
Page 11, line 7. For **justifiel** read **justified.**
Page 11, line 26. For **Psychoolgy** read **Psychology.**
Page 11, line 28. For **kleptomaniac** read **kleptomania.**
Page 11, line 42. For **or** read **of.**
Page 18, line 2. For **ideas** read **administration.**
Page 22, line 36. For **value** read **the vague.**
Page 26, line 7. For **comprehend** read **comprehended.**
Page 28, line 5. For **generative** read **degenerative.**
Page 29, line 16. Omit **It will be noted.**
Page 29, line 32. For **catalogued above** read **attempted by others.**
Page 37, line 31. For **declare** read **digest.**
Page 53, line 41. For **siv** read **six.**
Page 53, line 49. For **a mneumonic** read **to call a mnemonic.**
Page 62. Add to the footnote the words: **the old Attic comedy, had its origin in the fertility ceremonials and, consequently, in the phallic worship of the peasantry.—Ed.**
Page 63, line 28. For **Athics** read **Ethics.**

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PSYCHE AND EROS

An International Bi-Monthly Journal of Psychanalysis

(*Successor to* Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse)

Volume I. JULY, 1920 Number 1

# A Contribution to the Psychology of Exhibitionism

By Dr. Wm. Stekel

All sexologists include impulsive exhibitionistic acts among the commonest of the sexual transgressions to attract public attention. The malady—for such it is—has even found entrance into polite literature. Rousseau narrates that in obedience to a sudden impulse he would expose his posteriors to a crowd of wash-women. This sort of thing occurs rather infrequently. More often the culprit exposes only his penis, usually in a state of erection. So many women and girls undergoing psychanalytic treatment speak of having been subjected to this indignity that we are justified in considering it one of the common psychic traumata to which growing females are subjected. The men—the offenders are usually men—who practice this vice usually haunt the neighborhood of public schools and either expose themselves to the girls or merely rub up against them in a crowd or touch them as they pass by. [Not infrequently these men—they are usually elderly men—haunt the platforms of elevated stations near a girls' high-school, or sit in the elevated cars into which girls crowd on going home from school or from work.] Of most of these exhibitionists it may be said that they prefer to expose themselves to young children [and girls beyond the age of puberty].

The striking features of exhibitionism are the suddenness, impulsiveness and irresistibleness with which the desire to exhibit asserts itself. One who has the opportunity to listen to the heart-rending confessions of these sufferers is impressed again and again with the irresistible force of the impulse against which the patients contend in vain, notwithstanding their condemnation of it. After such an act there always succeeds a feeling of intense regret and contrite laceration of the spirit.

Most paraphilic acts—urolagina [drinking urine], cutting braids, exhibitionism, etc.—are carried out in a kind of stuporous condition, a pathologic dream state [amounting almost to a trance]. The clinical picture is almost always the same: the afflicted one is seized with a tremendous restlessness; he at once apprehends the approach of his dreadful craving; he is irritable and easily induced to act. Féré (**L'instinct sexuel,** Paris, 1899) calls attention to a relationship between exhibitionism and epilepsy—a relationship that had also been noticed by others (Laségue, Hotzen, Pribat, Lalanne, Seiffer, Krafft-Ebing, Burgl, Cramer Charkot-Magnan, Loehr, Naecke, Moll, Bloch, etc.). Féré sees in ex-

hibitionism a compulsive action (**idée obsedante**) occurring in a degenerate. He points out that exhibitionism has been observed in epileptics, senile dements, alcoholics, idiots, in imbeciles and in psychopathic inferiority (**faibles d'esprit**). But he commits the grave error of overlooking the fact that exhibitionism occurs also in persons presenting no evidence of degeneracy or bad hereditary influences. Krafft-Ebing also pointed out that exhibitionism occurs in epileptics and after traumata, and is frequent in sufferers from disease of the brain. He sees a relationship between exhibitionism and epilepsy and emphasizes the impulsiveness of the act and the dreamlike state in which it is performed. In one of his cases epileptic attacks and exhibitionistic acts occurred in alternation. Bloch accepts the differentiation between exhibition and exhibitionism that Burgl suggested. According to him exhibition is the occurrence of a single exposure, whereas exhibitionism is repeated and habitual exposure; exhibition occurs also in the healthy, whereas exhibitionism, with only rare exceptions (libertines!), occurs only in the insane or in the mentally defective.

Many phenomena are undoubtedly labelled exhibitionism which, properly speaking, are not true exhibitionism. No doubt most people enjoy being naked now and then; and it is therefore quite correct to say that a slight degree of exhibitionism is physiological. It becomes pathological only if it exceeds normal bounds and takes on a compulsive character. The essence of this paraphilia lies in its compulsiveness. By a compulsive action is meant an action whose senseless and punishable nature is recognized by the individual and which asserts itself again and again in spite of the individual's will to the contrary and against his conviction. The sufferer from a compulsion neurosis is dominated by an affect which has subjugated his intellect.

"Every compulsive act results from the repression of an idea that was painful to consciousness and from the transference of a freed affect upon another, seemingly less painful idea." ("Obsessions: their Psychic Causes and Treatment," by W. Stekel. **Amer. Jour. of Urol. and Sex.**, April, 1918). This formula will fit all cases whereas Freud's original formula applies only to selected cases. He said. "Compulsive ideas are always the transformation of repressed reproaches that have returned from the unconscious and which always relate to a pleasurable sexual event."

To the compulsive impulse to exhibit this formula of Freud's does not apply. It might possibly apply to the reproaches the individual makes himself after his transgression. But this reproach relates only to the last offence and might, at the most, be regarded only as a kind of new edition of an old reproach originating in childhood.

But the mechanism of the compulsive impulse, as manifested also in cases of kleptomania ("The Psychology of Kleptomania," by W. Stekel. **Amer. Jour. of Urol.**, etc. Feb., 1918) whose sexual nature I have carefully analysed, is wholly different. It is an urge to experience something that one has already experienced. It is the pursuit of an impression one has known in the past.

In bad cases of systematised fetichism one also finds this irresistible pursuit of and craving for an experience. Analysis will show over and

over again that it is a matter of living over again an old experience. All these people are trying to re-create their childhood in these impulses.

Therein the old experience ("the psychic trauma," if you will) is the crystallization point in the fantasy which they are trying to realize. The fantasy itself may be forgotten or repressed, or the patient fails to see the relationship between his compulsive impulse and the fantasy. The "forbidden" enters into all these compulsive impulses. A compulsive act is never a permissible act. In other words, even if the compulsive act is a seemingly harmless one, such as the **folie de toucher,** analysis will disclose a forbidden act behind it. A person suffering from an impulse to touch things is struggling with a desire to touch a forbidden sexual object that is attracting him. Numerous examples of this are found in the three volumes of my 'disturbances of the emotions and impulses.'

After these introductory comments I shall present a case of exhibitionism which I treated and which clearly illustrates the mechanisms of compulsive impulses.

The patient was a man of 39, photographer and artist by profession, who had been indicted for violating the law against public morals. A man who had seen him expose his genitalia before a ten-year old girl had reported him to a policeman who arrested him notwithstanding his protestations as to his innocence. When the case came up for a hearing he was discharged as the witness had disappeared. But the patient thereafter consulted me and begged to be cured. He prayed to be hypnotized and freed from his terrible impulse.

At this point I wish to emphasize the fact that it is utterly impossible to cure such a victim of compulsion by means of hypnosis. In very rare cases a patient may be sufficiently hypnotized to quiet him temporarily but the dammed up impulse soon flares up again. All these neurotics, they all are such, eagerly desire to be cured by hypnotism. This would save them the pain and trouble of having to confess themselves freely; they would conquer themselves without a struggle. But a cure can come only as the result of a struggle. The invalid must be shown, of course, with what he has to contend and must be able to undo the emotional displacement.

I therefore refused to hypnotize him and insisted on a psychanalytic therapy. Our patient is now 39 years old, the son of healthy parents. His family is free from lunatics and abnormalities. He is well built, presents no particular evidences of degeneracy. His development had been normal. His mother died in his sixth year and he went to an orphan asylum. He did not learn easily but what he learned he retained permanently and thoroughly. His father married again and then he returned to the parental roof. His parents often quarrelled bitterly, owing to mutual jealousy. His youth had been unhappy even ere this (they live very poorly), and after his father's second marriage he was still more unhappy. He clung to his father with an ardent love. His father was very good to him, but he suffered a great deal from his stepmother's moods and sternness. It was the more surprising to him therefore that she showed no modesty before him. She washed herself in his presence, completely exposing herself, and often walked about

naked before him, thus exciting him terribly and prematurely arousing his sexual desire. He does not recollect ever having masturbated before that. But under her influence he began to masturbate in his twelfth year. *

Even before he passed his thirteenth birthday his stepmother became more intimate with him. When her husband was away from home (his business often took him thence) she would be with her stepson, fondle his phallus and instruct him in sexualibus; he would soon be a man and therefore ought to know everything. Finally she prevailed on him for coitus "in positione reversa." Even at the first transgression of this kind he experienced an intense orgasm and a copious emission. This was followed by intense self reproach on his part. He could not look his father in the face. He determined to resist all temptation in the future. But hardly was he alone with his seducer when he succumbed to her allurements. She always insisted on his playing a passive rôle as in their first encounter. But after a year of this sort of thing he asserted himself and assumed the normal rôle.

At the age of 14 he left home and became a waiter. He did not seek the company of girls. His beautiful stepmother's image was ever before him and all he thought of was how soon he could manage to get to her. Now and then he had his desire. He had no other desire. At times he resorted to onanism during which he thought of his naked tempter. His comrades contributed their share to excite his fantasies but they could not prevail on him to have commerce with prostitutes or to make friendships with girls.

Mysticism always attracted him. He would have loved to earn his living by being a magician. Very early in life he became quite expert at conjuring and became so clever in the art that he now makes a very fine living from it. He had always had the fantasy of being gifted with supernatural powers and knew more than the other boys. Inasmuch as in his childhood he had wished his stepmother would come to him, after she had excited him by the exposure of her person, the subsequent fulfilment of his wish seemed to him the result of his magical power. In this way there grew up a secret belief in the power of his thoughts. He believed in the magical power of his desires and his appearance. His stepmother often praised his figure and said he had a wondrously beautiful member with which one could not help falling in love.

At 17 he entered the army, served seven years, rose to the rank of 'accountant of the first class,' then served three years more during the war, ten years in all. During all this time he had never once been guilty of any offence, but, on the contrary, had received several decorations. I mention these facts to show that we are not dealing with a man who could be said to be "constitutionally inferior." Had he been so his

*Naecke attributes exhibitionism to frequent onanism, because, he says, the onanist ceases to be ashamed of his body. This hypothesis is more than questionable. We know that onanists are the most bashful persons and resent extremely any exposure of their bodies [even before their physicians]. This does not, of course, exclude the possibility of an exhibitionist being also an onanist, as is the case with all sexual-neurotics who can find adequate gratification only in their fantasies if they are not to come in conflict with the prevailing moral code.

heightened and uncontrollable affectivity would have involved him in difficulties or led to the punishable infringement of some rules.

The subsequent development of his sexual life is of interest. He masturbated since his twelfth year and always resorted to onanism when the exhibitionistic impulse seized him. That alone can save him from violating the law.

Mature women and even girls interested him but he was shy and dared not approach them. He declares he had no opportunities to meet women, but this is not true. His stepmother's image was always before him and he fled from all opportunities. He could not free himself from her.

When he was 19 his father died and his stepmother married again. This seems to have turned him from women altogether. Suddenly he experienced a disgust for women, hated the female sex and felt himself as a homosexual—'like so many other artists.' But he lacked the courage to commit a homosexual act. He began to show a great interest in young boys. He fell passionately in love with a young male acrobat who now played the chief rôle in his onanistic fantasies. Then other boys became the love objects in his fantasies, but he never made any overt advances to any of them.

At 20 heterosexual desire again awoke in him, but this time it was for young girls. A girl of 18 is no longer attractive to him as a sexual object, she is too old. Girls between the ages of 8 and 14 excite him most if he sees their naked feet or their drawers. The impulse often comes upon him with such force that he cannot resist it. The attack works out in a dream-like trance. The patient describes his condition as follows.

'I fully realize the enormity of my passion and am the unhappiest mortal on God's earth inasmuch as I do not know how to free myself from this unhappy, fearful, insane impulse and can think of only one way out of it—to throw away this miserable, perverted and ruined life of mine. I often make the best resolutions and decide never to lapse again, but all my good resolutions fly to the winds if I happen to see in the street the kind of girl I like (short dress, stockings, etc.). Then I am very unhappy again and regret what I did,—I am no man, I who have never harmed a living thing, I who pride myself on having no bad qualities, as all my acquaintances will testify. I am like one under a curse. This passion has again and again stood in the way of my progress and but for it I could be much more advanced than I am. This madness follows me everywhere; even while I am at work I must quit and quiet my soul by masturbating when the obscene images get me. This happens once or twice daily. My only hope is God and medical science; possibly I may yet be cured and begin to lead a happy life."

This despairing cry shows how greatly the patient suffers from his compulsion. He is ready to make any sacrifice to free himself from it and even inquires whether castration will cure him of his affliction.

His anamnesis furnishes these additional facts: when he was 9 years old he went into the woods one day with several boys and girls; there one of the older girls, aged 11, proposed to him that they undress and show each other the genitals, but he was so ashamed that he ran away from her. This incident often recurs to his memory.

Let us now review this clinical history and attempt by its aid to get an understanding of the psychogenesis of exhibitionism. [What is true of the above patient may also prove to be true of others].

Schrenck-Notzing (1902) has pointed out the infantile roots of this perversion. In a case reported by him the patient recalled that in his childhood he had participated in a game which consisted of a number of children marching in front of one another in turn with their genitals exposed. There is food for thought here. Most analysed neurotics tell of such experiences. Exhibitionistic acts are the rule, not the exception, in children. If children are permitted to play together unobserved they will often expose themselves and indulge in mutual inspection [and handling] of the genitalia. Notwithstanding this, these children do not all become exhibitionists; only a small percentage of them develop the exhibitionistic tendency that is peculiar to cultured humanity. Here we would include such phenomena as the wearing of decollette garments by women at balls [and at the theatre], the customary promenading in half undress at the beaches, the propaganda for going about naked [in the woods or at home] and similar fads and fashions compatible with the reigning conventions. But these childish games do not explain the compulsive impulse to exhibitionistic acts which, as we know, are bound up with great danger for the social existence of the exhibitionist.

Years ago (1911) I called attention (in Zentralblatt f. Psychoanalyse) to one of the special psychological roots of exhibitionism: the belief in the magical power of one's form and a belief in the extraordinary beauty and irresistibleness of one's genitals.

"The Exhibitionist," I wrote, "believes in the irresistibleness and magical power of his bodily charms. This proves exhibitionism to be a specialised form of narcism. It is an eruption of an intense self-love and a projection of one's self-valuation upon the environment. This overestimation of one's body explains the various love-charms and conjurations during which the part concerned has to be exposed." And Freud, as editor, added the following comment to my remarks: "It seems probable that this attribution of exhibitionism to unconscious narcistic motives can also be applied to the explanation of the apotropaic role of nudity in the life of ancient peoples." I referred to an occurrence that had transpired only recently in a courtroom in Venice. A poor woman on the witness-stand suddenly threw off all her clothes, and standing naked before the judges, exclaimed: "Behold, gentlemen, how beautiful I am!" (This act got her six months in jail. . .)

In their chapter on Exhibitionism Ellis and Moll ("Handbook of Sexual Science") speak of the powerful effect the exhibitionist wishes to produce. In this they come near the truth, without, however, recognizing it. The exhibitionist wants to beget a powerful emotion. But what emotion? That they failed to see. It is admiration. When Garnier's patient was anxious to know what the people thought of him he really thirsted for a confirmation of his self-love. Another one of Garnier's patients who practised his vice in churches (a relatively frequent occurrence which I shall explain later) said: "I watch to see the effect of my act on the faces of the women to whom I expose myself. I want to see that it gives them great pleasure. In reality I wish to

compel them to think to themselves: 'what an impression nature makes when it is seen in this way.'"

We may say then that the exhibitionist wishes to excite admiration. Stanley Hall points to exhibitionism as an atavistic fragment of phallic worship. Ellis and Moll regard exhibitionism as a kind of pseudo-atavism. "It is not a genuine emergence of an instinct inherited from one's ancestors but rather that, as a result of a paralysis of the higher feelings that have developed with the growth of culture, the exhibitionist has been thrown back to a mental level corresponding to a primitive epoch in man's evolution; and there is created a soil in which the instincts of a lower cultural level again take root and grow."

But it is not a matter of atavism, but of infatilism which, to be sure, is, according to the biogenetic law, representative of a primitive period in the history of mankind. All children are narcistic and believe in their magical power. [Cf. Ferenczi's essay on the evolution of the sense of reality in Ernest Jones's fine translation of Ferenczi's essays: "Contributions to Psycho-analysis."] All children are exhibitionistic and this tendency is overcome only as a result of education which teaches the child to be ashamed. Exhibitionism means an overcoming of this sense of shame. As Freud has shown, in their earliest investigations as to where children come from, children try to see their parent's genitals During an attack the exhibitionist is a child again and judges the world according to infantile standards. He thinks he is doing the community a great favor. And in the attacks he usually resorts to children because then he too is a child.

The belief in the magical virtues of his figure is intensified by a bad bringing up. How often do children hear their parents say how nice, charming, sweet, beautiful, kissable, etc., they are! [And how often are children encouraged to admire themselves and even to kiss the reflections of themselves. Affectionate mothers are very prone, too, to admire and praise their baby boys' genitals!]

But let us return to our patient. We recollect that his stepmother had praised his phallus. She thus planted in him an admiration for his phallus and thus intensified an already existing infantile tendency. (Many neurotics are in love with their own genitalia!) In addition to this he had been a conjurer since his childhood and believed in magic. He is a magician by occupation and is always bent on surprising people and making them believe that he is the possessor of higher spiritual powers.

He wants to bewitch his environment with his phallus and to show them the object of his self-love. He behaves like King Kandeles in Hebbel's **Gyges and His Ring.** What benefit did the King derive from having a beautiful wife if no one envied him his possession? He wants to be envied for her. Our patient wants to be envied for his penis or for some other part of his body with which he is in love.

The naked organ is always the exhibitionist's strongest erogenous zone. If he believes in the beauty and magical power of his penis it is that that he will expose. But other parts of the body are also exposed. I refer to the celebrated example of Jean Jacques Rousseau whose nates were a strongly erogenous zone. This is shown by the fact that being punished on the buttocks gave him great pleasure. It was his nates that

he exhibited. He reports that he used to frequent alleys and lonely places in which to indulge his propensity. What he showed the women "was not a naughty object, that did not occur to me, but a ludicrous object. My stupid pleasure in showing it is indescribable. Only a step more and I would have had my desire, for surely some spirited passer-by would have gratified me if I had had the courage to wait."

From his "Confessions" we know the difficulty he got into in Turin because of his exhibitionism. He got away from the police only by weeping and begging and lying.

As I shall show elsewhere Rousseau's paranoia is connected with his latent homosexuality (in which the erogenous nature of the buttocks and the anus constitutes only the organic basis). What interests us in his case now is the repetition of the impression that he sought. It was when his aunt spanked him on the nates that he first experienced sexual pleasure. It is this first pleasure that he is trying to live over again. It is interesting too that this body exhibitionist wrote his "Confessions" and thus furnished an instance of "psychic exhibitionism" which I consider one of the roots of the desire to go on the stage and to write poetry and fiction. (Cf. my booklet, as yet untranslated, "Dichtung und Neurose").

What we must therefore emphasize is the infantile trait in exhibitionism. It is not a mere matter of accident that most exhibitionists display themselves before children. In a certain sense every child is exhibitionistic. In exhibitionism I see only a fragment of the widely disseminated abnormality of the sexual instinct that I have designated as "psychosexual infantilism." Gratification by onanism is also infantile. Burgl, who is an expert in these matters, also stresses the point that exhibitionists rarely touch the children improperly and that assaults are uncommon. In most cases the offence is only exposure during urination. This is the commonest and least dangerous form of exhibitionism. The invalid is engaged in emptying his bladder and suddenly turns around to face approaching children and women. He can usually get out of trouble, if he is arrested, by pleading carelessness or confusion. The variety of onanism indulged in during or after the exposure is of a typically infantile character.

[In New York there are two favorite modes of exhibiting: in one the offender sits on a park bench or in a car and pretends to be reading a newspaper which hides his erect phallus; on the approach of a girl or a woman he lifts up his paper sufficiently to expose himself. In the other, the miscreant—who is always a male—haunts public schools or busy streets near the large department stores and factories employing many girls! These fellows, at the approach of a female, suddenly throw open their buttoned overcoats and display their genitalia. The curious thing about the members of the latter type is that they love to adorn the phallus by tying colored ribbons around it, thus not only shocking the girls but making them laugh. Some exhibitionists lure girls to their homes by advertising in the "help wanted" columns and then bribe or compel them to look on while they masturbate.]

Elsewhere ("Dichtung und Neurose") I have maintained that the characteristic feature of onanism is the fantasy associated with it. This fantasy usually emanates from early childhood and reproduces an actual

or fancied situation from that period,—a situation that had great emotional value for the little one. Neurosis I defined as a temporary blotting out of the boundaries between reality and fantasy. The neurotic is dominated by symbols. With the neurotic it is ever a matter of the ability to give oneself up in one's day dreams to fantasies which acquire the emotional value of realities.

The neurotic is pursuing an impression from the past which he longs to live over again. This explains the trance-like state which characterises the exhibitionistic act,—a state which has struck all observers, especially Kraft-Ebing. The offender is experiencing a dream. We have to assume that a continual conflict between fantasy and reality is going on in his soul. All pleasure clamors for repetition. The neurotic becomes an actor who finally enacts the wished for scene to himself with himself as the actor of the different roles. The impulse to exhibit is therefore the erotic imperative of the past. Nietzsche has expressed this beautifully in the words: "All pleasure demands eternity,—vast, vast eternity."

All these invalids who are being driven by dark impulses and are ever meditating on and committing criminal acts—the exhibitionists, kleptomaniacs, pyromaniacs, frotteurs, braid-clippers, reniffleurs, etc.—are pursuing an infantile impression. In the act they are children again and behave with the stupidity of little children. Their act is committed in a kind of trance state from which they awake with fright; repentance and consternation follow as soon as they realise the folly of their behavior.

We may say then that the exhibitionistic act is a waking hallucination to which a great present importance is imparted by a "scrap of reality."

An epileptic attack is usually also an hallucination in which an act unacceptable to consciousness is being enacted in sleep. In an essay 'on the psychic treatment of epilepsy' (Cf. the second edition of my book on apprehensions, l. c.) I tried to show that only few cases of "epilepsy" are due to organic lesions in the brain, that most are due to criminal impulses of all sorts that are repressed and fulfilled in a pathologic sleep. Numerous analyses of "epileptics" have confirmed me in the correctness of my conclusion. The practical results obtained in treating epileptics on this theory have proved very satisfactory. The crime committed during a so-called epileptic spell is usually of a sexual nature. (I therefore maintain that Dostojewski, who was an epileptic, was guilty of sadistic assaults on children in his attacks. Many passages in his writings confirm my hypothesis. In the Mss. that were discovered after his death such a realistic description of such a scene was found that his executors have not yet decided to publish it.)

The kinship between psychogenetic epilepsy and exhibitionism is apparent. They are different expressions of the same malady. The "epileptic" withdraws from reality and experiences his scene in the fantasy of an attack. The exhibitionist seeks to experience the scene in reality and in doing so he exchanges roles, as I shall soon show, and undertakes a change of scene. He sets the stage for an old scene which he is determined to re-enact. The same thing, I may add, is true of the fetichist. (Cf. my essay on "fetichism" in the **Zentralblatt f. Psychoanalyse,** vol. 3.)

Let us see how these theories apply to the case cited above. Our patient had been seduced by his stepmother. For two years prior to that scene she had often exposed herself before him in a most shameless manner in order to excite him and prepare him for what was to follow. With his experience our patient's destiny was settled. He was for all time anchored to his stepmother. He himself says that during his stay in the army he never visited a female because his mother's image was always in his mind's eye. After her second marriage he was so overcome by indignation and jealousy that he began to hate all women and for a time he became homosexual. In my book on homosexuality I show that this affliction is always psychically determined. Our patient was on the right road to homosexuality. He differs from other homosexuals only in the fact that in them the traumatic experience and its pathological effect lie far back in childhood and are no longer conscious. They are "repressed," as Freud would say. Our patient's traumata occurred during his puberty period. But his dramatising tendency began as early as his homosexual period. He re-enacted only the traumatic experiences with his mother. The boy with whom he had fallen in love became the image of his own youth and he reserved to himself the role of mother. He re-enacted the scene but exchanged the roles: he was the mother and the beloved boy was he. But his inhibitions were still stronger than his craving. (His onanism had much to do with this inasmuch as it furnished him with a vent.) In my book on 'onanism and homosexuality' I have emphasized the important role onanism plays in the protection of society against breaches of morality. This case too shows the correctness of my position. The patient says he had begun a conflict with onanism and went through long periods of abstinence. The first exhibitionistic act followed immediately after a period of abstinence lasting two months and ended with an onanistic act at home. In all his onanistic acts the scene with his mother, often somewhat disguised, recurs to his mind.

Later on he contended with his homosexual urge which always worried him as being something abnormal. He turned to girls and with them played the scene with his mother, but with the sexual roles reversed: he, the man, was the mother and the little girls were he. He thus identified himself with his mother and the girls with his infantile self.

An analyst will never understand a neurotic unless he is familiar with the mechanisms of identification and differentiation. All homosexuals play such scenes during which they assign to themselves and their partners all sorts of roles.

We see then that our patient is always repeating a scene from his childhood and that his exhibitionism can be satisfactorily explained as the sequel to traumatic experiences.

The case might of course be regarded as an exceptional one. But my experience teaches that it is not such. The more deeply I penetrate the psyche and the past of neurotics the more frequently do I discover gross errors in their early bringing up and actual incestuous occurrences. In alcoholics, in neurotic parents and in such as are constitutionally inferior such acts occur not infrequently. Such acquired burdens are much more serious matters than congenital defects. One who studies

the clinical histories of exhibitionists will always find details pointing to the effects of occurrences of an incestuous nature. As our patient's history shows these experiences need not necessarily be in the patient's childhood. Seeing that Merzbach ("Die Krankhaften Erscheinungen des Geschlechtssinnes, 1909, p. 339) reports a case in which the first exhibitionistic act occurred on the first anniversary of the death of the patient's mother, I am justifiel, in connection with my own experience, to maintain that there is a relationship between mother and the impulse to exhibitionism. One of Moll's patients reports that his first impulse to exhibit occurred in his fifth year as he sat in front of a family portrait and felt an urge to expose his penis. After he was married he had no desire to exhibit himself. Subsequently, especially at times when his wife rejected his advances, his desire would recur, especially so if she—as often happened—applied abusive language to him in his attempts at coitus. (Merzbach, p. 337.)

This may be set down as universally true: infantilism or the urge thereto recurs every time that the actual form of gratification is interfered with or associated with something painful or unpleasant. His wife's refusal and humiliation of him led to a "regression to infantile sources of pleasure," a phenomenon that the French call "retour à l'énfance" and which may attain such a degree of intensity as to make the individual utterly childish. The neurotic flies from the displeasurable present (Reality) into the pleasurable past (Fantasy).

The urge to live this fantasy over leads to active exhibitionism. In this malady we see the characteristics of all compulsive activities, exactly as in the case of kleptomania. (Cf. my essay on "The Psychoolgy of Kleptomania," translated, with additions, by S. A. Tannenbaum.) In kleptomaniac too, it is a matter of displacement of an affect. The kleptomaniac has the impulse to do something forbidden,—in the case of women to touch or handle something forbidden. The theft is an out-and-out substitutive action replacing another and more strictly forbidden act. At this point we may recall my definition of compulsive ideas: "Every compulsive idea (obsession) results from the repression of an idea inacceptable to consciousness and by means of a displacement of the freed affect upon another and apparently less painful idea."

As to compulsive actions Freud has given us this valuable formula: "Compulsive actions are substitutions for other acts that the individual would like to do but which are strictly forbidden by the moral ego. The affect appertaining to the idea repressed from consciousness attaches itself to the substitute action. Inasmuch as the substituted act is only a symbolic representation of the unconscious act it never yields a full measure or gratification and the urge is never allayed."

Freud's definition of compulsive ideas, which we have already given, does not apply to all cases and does not exhaust the mechanism of compulsive actions. Obsessive acts are attempts to re-enact in a somewhat altered form an action pleasurably performed in childhood.

Our patient is still in love with his stepmother and he craves to resurrect the erotic scenes initiated by his seducer. (In his novel, **Nils Tuffeson und seine Mutter,** the Norse writer, Geijerstamm, describes a son who lives in incest with his mother and he emphasizes the fact

that such persons remain forever anchored to the mother and are incapable of turning to another love-object.) He does not acknowledge to himself that he is mastered by this love and this craving. The affect transfers itself upon the impulse to expose himself before children. One might almost say that he is forced into a wrong channel. His great excitement enables him to live over in fantasy the old scenes with his stepmother.

We have here an illustration of the tenacity with which all human beings cling to their first sexual impressions which according to Binet is of the utmost significance for all the various forms of psycho-sexual infantilism.

Other features also become intelligible now which hitherto have not been so. Many of these unfortunates, for example, have the impulse to expose themselves in churches and other public places with which a certain measure of sacredness or solemnity is associated. One man undressed in the background of his box during a performance of "Parsifal" and then, wholly nude, stepped up to the railing, exposing himself to the public. Others prefer churches. The following case illustrates this phenomenon and shows us the psychological roots of the malady.

Mr. Z. P., aged 42, quite healthy, without any evidences of degeneracy, consults me about an intense urge to expose himself in churches and great suffering inasmuch as he is of a profoundly religious nature. We learn that his mother was an incorrigible drunkard and finally had to be committed to an asylum. It is well known that such alcoholics exercise no restraint and in their drunkenness abandon themselves to the promptings of their natural impulses. Consequently our patient witnessed many painful scenes in his home. His mother always had numerous lovers. At the age of 12½ it once happened that he looked into his mother's room through a key-hole and saw how she received one of her gallants, an officer in the army. She undressed completely. Fascinated, he continued to gaze and witnessed all the details of the coitus,—a scene which was indelibly impressed in his brain. In his depressive attacks this scene always came to his mind.

His exhibitionism was now quite clear. To a child its mother ought to be something dignified and holy. His mother's name was Mary. His mother and the Mother of God were thus fused into a single psychic entity. Between the ages of 13 to 15 he lived through a period in which something within compelled him to utter blasphemous curses, most of which referred to the mother of God. It was obviously an affective displacement. The curses and deprecatory phrases really applied to his mother. The remarkable thing about it all and what he could not understand was that he loved this mother and that love and hatred for 'this vile woman' alternated in his breast. . . . .

He finally succeeded in forgetting his mother's grievous conduct. But it was not a real forgetting; it was only a repression. In his unconscious his mother's image was alive and the dreadful disrobing scene (the visitor had also undressed) acted as an urge for repetition. In his fantasy he lived the scene over again with himself in the rôle at times of his mother and, at times, of her lover. Inasmuch as in his youth he had to witness a frequent substitution of one lover for another and inasmuch as the above scene was not the only scene the silent

watcher had the chance to spy upon, we can understand why he also suffered from various paraphilia. He had a craving for mixoscopy (Moll's excellent word for voyeurism), for exhibitionism, and also for getting drunk. But with superhuman power he denied himself these breaches. He differentiated himself from his mother; he wished to be different from her. But the urge to desecrate everything holy remained. Inwardly he was a sceptic and a cynic. Even these tendencies he repressed. He married and was good to his wife but could not love her passionately. But towards his children he felt a genuine sexual attraction which frightened him and had much to do with finally bringing him under my professional care. The analysis showed that he wished to do with his children what he wished his mother had done with him. His emotion at the time of the reported incident had been primarily one of jealousy. He identified himself with his mother and his child would have represented him had anything transpired between them. Fortunately his strongly developed ethos prevented the gratification of his pathological impulses.

Psychanalysis will often enable us to discover that there is no truth in the popular saying that "the apple falls not far from the tree." We often see an exaggerated morality in the children of lewd women, evidently as a result of a desire to be different from her. The sons of drunkards and Don Juans may grow up to be highly moral and proper members of society, owing to a preponderance of the urge for differentiation over that for identification. It does, it is true, happen now and then that a sudden identifying process is set in action and with it a change of character. Such changes are especially liable to occur in the senium as a result of organic changes in the brain [and in the ductless glands] resulting in the abolition of certain inhibitions [and other changes] which permit the primitive man to emerge. This explains the relatively frequent occurrence of exhibitionism in old age as a manifestation of incipient senile dementia. The senium is characterised by a marked regression to the infantile. The exhibitionism of old age is an evidence of psychic regression after the cessation of the previous inhibitions.

One gets an idea of the prevalence of exhibitionism only when, after years of investigation, one learns that many persons masturbate standing naked in front of a mirror, at the same time indulging in a fantasy which is usually of an infantile nature. At times the actual onanism is omitted and the person indulges only in what may be designated psychic auto-erotism. Among those guilty of this we must include persons who have "mirror rooms" in their homes that they may admire themselves from all sides. Narcism is always linked with exhibitionism. There are persons who love to see themselves "in coitu" and who must perform their sexual rites in front of a mirror or sacrifice their libido. Usually the mirror is only a preparation for an exhibitionistic act, as is shown by the following case:

Miss S. W., teacher, 35 years old, complains of hysterical attacks that are a source of distress to her because in them she tears off all her clothes and runs naked on the porch of her house. She is afraid lest some day she might get such an attack while at school and expose herself before the "innocent children." According to the descriptions

furnished by her physician and the inmates of her home, her attacks are as follows. She begins to scream suddenly, repeatedly calls out "no, no, no! I won't do it!" She runs about the room as if she were being pursued. Then she tears off her clothes with one hand while she tries to cover herself with the other. The attacks occur usually when she is dressing or undressing—when the nudeness is more easily brought about. Being undressed, she begins to sob and to moan. Very clearly she says, "oh, oh, too much, too much!" Then, all naked, she runs out on the corridor and wants to go into the street. She is usually restrained in this or kept from leaving the room. The scene ends with a short period of something resembling sleep and slight confusion from which she emerges without any recollection of what has transpired.

I once observed her during such an attack. There were no indications of epilepsy. The corneal and pharyngeal reflexes were abolished; the pupils were dilated during the attack but reacted promptly to light. At the close of the attack the Babinski symptom was not in evidence; no change in the reflexes during an attack; after the attack no sensory disturbances; no petechia; reflexes on both sides alike.

From her "history" we learn that her father used to go on periodic sprees although otherwise he was a very good and refined man; but when he was drunk he indulged in lewd jests, smashed things and threatened his children. She recalls no sexual acts with her father, but two of her brothers did play a rôle in her sexual life. When she was 9 her thirteen-year-old brother had her undress as they were playing alone in a meadow. Though unwilling at first, she finally consented just for the fun of it. Finally she submitted to her brother's other suggestions and he indulged in cunnilingus. This sort of thing happened several times during the succeeding year and resulted in the brother's having to leave home. When she was twelve another brother, aged 14, came into her bed at night and had coitus with her. This lasted for several months. Then her conscience began to trouble her and she thought of confessing all, but she lacked the courage to do so and confessed only to having been guilty of improper conduct and thoughts. To her delight the too busy confessor let her off with some customary penance and strict injunctions.

Subsequently she began to masturbate by imitating her brothers' manipulations. While doing so she thought of the scenes with her brothers and found that the thought of being naked intensified her desire. She struggled in vain to give up onanism but ever relapsed after shorter or longer intervals. Then her character took on a remarkable phase. She became so excessively sensitive, modest and distant, that her friends and associates laughed at her. She became a teacher and devoted herself to her profession with great earnestness. She cherished the young souls entrusted to her as if they had been tender blossoms. She was interested in men but kept them at a distance, though she wished to be married. She trusted no man and looked on them all as seducers. In her twenty-fifth year, after the marriage of her older brother, she became more libidinous. All this time she had been masturbating. On his wedding-day she was greatly excited, cried much and it so happened that that night, as she undressed in front of

a mirror, she had to masturbate. After that night she often had to do the same thing. While thus employed one night the thought flashed on her mind: what would the children say if you did this before them. Two years later she happened to be visiting an aunt in the country and slept with a niece (8 years old) in a room containing a large mirror. She felt an urge to masturbate in front of the child and do cunnilingus. She waited till the child fell asleep, masturbated in front of the mirror while keeping her eyes fixed on the child. Intense remorse followed and on the following day she insisted on returning home. She resolved never to masturbate again. A sympathetic colleague now began to woo her. She no longer masturbated and had all large mirrors removed from her room. All she retained was a small hand-mirror for her toilette. She thought herself cured. It was evident her colleague courted her. Once he told her that he could not marry a woman unless she had first given herself to him. This was one of his convictions which he would not depart from. She rejected him indignantly but often regretted having done so. About this time her younger brother returned. They became very intimate and finally concluded to keep house together. Neither said anything about their childhood experiences and both behaved as if nothing had ever transpired between them. But her brother soon made the acquaintance of a girl with whom he fell in love and to whom he became engaged. The marriage was to be in a few months. She looked upon all this as a breach of fealty, became jealous of the prospective sister-in-law, and fretted a great deal, especially as the girl was poor. She herself, she thought, had been thrown over because she had no money. In the meantime she was getting older and longed for marriage and a home of her own. It was in this period that her attacks began in which she re-enacted the seduction scenes with her brothers—scenes which otherwise seemed to have been forgotten. Analytic treatment resulted in a quick cure. She married shortly afterwards and says her exhibitionistic tendency has been wholly conquered.

We see that in the above case the driving power for the patient's exhibitionistic fantasies was furnished by her experiences with her brothers which no longer occupied her attention, which she had "forgotten." As long as she indulged in onanism she was able sufficiently to resist her craving. After the cessation of onanism she had to satisfy her exhibitionistic urge in hysterical attacks.

In another case a patient told me that in her seventh year her father had abused her sexually. Her father had repeatedly put membrum virile in her hand and on one occasion tried thus to bring about an emission but desisted when he saw how pained she was. The patient has a great urge to loiter about public urinals and to watch the men as they come out and adjust their clothes. She longed to come across exhibitionists and was lucky enough to have her desire on two occasions. After fussing around about a urinal she hurries home and masturbates with the aid of an artificial phallus that she had secured with the aid of an anonymous correspondence in one of the newspapers. Her assertion about her father was confirmed beyond question. It is, as we know, difficult to distinguish fact from fancy. Patients often give detailed accounts of traumata which occurred only in fantasy.

In the pathogenesis of neurosis fantasies have the same traumatic significance as actual experiences, especially if they acquire a fixation in consequence of onanism. Notwithstanding this, I have found actual traumata in all my cases of exhibitionism.

In the above case the alleged facts were confirmed by the father himself who came to me in great contrition of spirit, describing himself as a criminal deserving of the severest punishment. He believed that his daughter had forgotten what had occurred and in extenuation of his crimes he had only one excuse: he was a very sick man and was not responsible for what he did when he was drunk.

I shall cite no more cases. Those cited show us that exhibitionism is a disease, not a wilful licentiousness. One who has seen how these exhibitionists suffer under their affliction will have nothing but sympathy for them. It will no longer occasion any surprise to find exhibitionism occurring in psychopaths, in drunkards, in senile dementia, in the early stages of progressive paralysis and may even occur in association with epilepsy. If the inhibitions are for any reason abolished the infantile asserts itself and the neurotic, exhibitionistic, sado-masochistic, mysophilic, etc., instincts become evident. But we must insist on classifying exhibitionism as a compulsion neurosis. That means that the malady has a psychic basis and is curable by psychanalysis.

I therefore demand that every case of exhibitionism not due to an organic malady be submitted to psychanalytic treatment. It is only a matter of time when a psychanalytic sexologist will be called in as an expert in most cases of sexual crimes and perhaps in all crimes. The growth of sexual science imperatively demands courses of instruction in sexology. These courses ought to be combined with the courses in psychotherapeutics. For it is not impossible that by hypnotising them valuable information could be elicited from some exhibitionists and other sexual offenders as to the roots of their maladies. I have seen no advantages in treating neurotics by hypnotism, and I prefer psychanalysis. But other psychotherapeutists may have better luck as to that. At any rate, no psychotherapeutist should be content with only hypnotism and suggestion, but should use hypnosis as a means of eliciting the repressed experiences and fantasies.

Exhibitionism is no longer, I am confident, the unfathomable mystery we were wont to think it. We know how it is brought about and how to cure it.

As a result of analysis the patient learns to understand what ails him. He begins to understand that he is repeating an infantile experience, he comprehends his urge, he dissolves the affective displacement and fights the foe whom he now knows. To be psychically healthy means to overcome one's past. The exhibitionist too must oercome his infantilism, his pathologic self-love and over-estimation of himself and turn to other sexual objects. Then the compulsion ceases, the dream-like state is succeeded by the critical light of consciousness—and he is cured.—*Translated and annotated by S. A. Tannenbaum.*

# The Origin and the Meaning of the Symbols of Freemasonry

**(A lecture delivered on November 30, 1919, before the Grand Lodge of Vienna)**

**By Dr. Herbert Silberer, Vienna**

Psychanalysis, in its various applications, is at every step concerned with symbols. And since symbols are extraordinarily complex, their understanding frequently entails both a patient analysis of their incredibly numerous ramifications and a sympathetically reconstructive synthesis of the constituents thus obtained. This is especially true of such symbols as are founded in old traditions and embody the rich accumulations of the cultures of many generations. It is hoped therefore that the following example of the analysis of a highly developed symbol which has undergone an extremely large amount of elaboration of this sort may prove of interest not only for the sake of the subject-matter but also because of the methodology of its elaboration, although, or perhaps because, the nature of the subject-matter involves work partly beyond the province of psychanalysis. May this study stimulate others to similar researches!

## I

### The Nature of Symbols—Their Origin and Source

It would be impossible for us to find our way about amid the infinite complexities of the world of which we too are a part, or even to attain to a cosmology, if we did not discover in its confusing variety certain universals, a system of laws,—laws that hold good for us too and which make it possible to order and take-in the otherwise elusive variety.

The miracle that the laws which obtain in the world about us are to be found within us as well has been brought somewhat within our comprehension by the miracle of Immanuel Kant's genius. He taught us that it is the laws which hold good for us that we project into Nature, so that we find them there. This process is not to be understood in terms of a temporal 'before' and 'after,' but in the transcendental sense. As an instance of these laws, I need refer only to Kant's doctrine of categories. I mention these things not as a prelude to a philosophical disquisition but to make more intelligible how, in his endeavor to master the infinite variety of phenomena, man has ever been driven to discover a system of principles by which the universe might be explained: abbreviations in the book of nature.

Astrology was one of the first forms in the history of culture which such principles assumed. The ancient Babylonians and Chaldeans sys-

tematised the universe as though it were a number of provinces under a celestial ministry and whose ideas lay in the hands of planetary spirits. All living things, activities, conditions, natural phenomena, seasons, diseases and whatever else one can think of, were assigned to these provinces, and according to analogies which seem to us today largely superficial. The conditions obtaining in the heavens provided the formulae by which the diversity of earthly happenings were envisaged and controlled. When the progress of knowledge rendered astrology superfluous and broke the tablets of its laws, astrology did not wholly disappear. Modes of thought which were once necessary never wholly disappear. When they die, that part which has permanent justification (their soul, as it were) is received into the heaven of science, whilst their mortal remains become the heritage of superstition. To be sure, religion and art too demand a portion of this heritage, a portion which trinitarians would perhaps call the "soul," whilst the portion assigned to science they would call the "spirit."

Another form of abbreviation is seen in the effort to understand the universe by means of letters. This practice is best expressed in the Jewish "Cabala." The place of the constellations and their relations is here taken by the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and their possible combinations. These constitute the cabalistic principles of the creation and the preservation of the world. Both these systems show some relationship, since letters—originally ideograms—correspond in their turn to representations of stars. This connection can be traced in the history of civilization. The use of letters as abbreviations for phenomena of the world readily suggests itself, since they are the constituents of the best organ of philosophical thought: speech. We see here an effort to understand the universe on a subjective basis.

A step forward or pendant is the choice of an objective basis such as is offered by the Pythagorean doctrine of numbers in which numerals play the part of world principles in a sense which appears to us quite uncritical. And yet we can think of no science more objective than mathematics; furthermore, it provides more immediately for the external phenomena a system of the most complete abbreviations.

A mighty step forward toward a spiritual interpretation was accomplished by Plato with his doctrine of ideas which we may also consider as representing the much sought-for cosmologic principles. Their high moral worth is due to the prominent place which the doctrine assigns to the idea of the good and the beautiful. His doctrine brings us to the highest planes of thought.

Nor should the categories of Aristotle be forgotten, the uncritical forerunners of those other categories in the formulation of which Kant directed philosophy toward the keenest consciousness of the self.

The symbols of freemasonry too are such points of contact between phenomena and mind as the imagive abbreviations we have just passed in review. Nay, more; they are not only similar to them, not only related in principle, but they have even retained much of their matter, something from each—and there was something good in all of them. If today we are inclined to smile at this or that early mode of thought—let us say at astrology, for example—let us not forget that it was a

necessary step in man's advance and let us not be so naive as to think that later generations, thousands of years hence, may not find our mode of looking at the world childish. Let us then take heed to discover the permanent in the transitory, to understand its evolution, to preserve and cherish what is best in it, and to fathom its innermost, eternal significance.

All the aforementioned systems aimed at compassing the entire world. Freemasonry aims at nothing less; I shall only remind the initiated of the question in the masonic catechism about the shape of the lodge. Considering the many-sidedness and the wide compass of what is spread out before us, it would be hopeless to think of offering in a short lecture a complete exposition of the symbolism of freemasonry or of even one aspect of it; I conceive my task to be rather to throw out hints in various directions and more especially to stress the many-sidedness of the subject.

Before all else, something must be said about the essence of symbols. It is perhaps most convenient to begin by contrasting it with an allegorical picture. The latter, at any rate in its simplest form, is somewhat thin, dry, prosy, and can be resolved with a sign of equality. This woman here with the mural crown is a city; that other one with the sheaf and sickle is agriculture; that Neptune there with the trident and sea-horses signifies the sovereignty of the seas, navigation. These equations impress us as conventional and vapid, if we disregard the occasional artistry of the figures which has nothing to do with them as symbols. Although it must be admitted that allegory may acquire life in more richly developed and poetical shape,—but for good reasons we have chosen for comparison the simplest type, an immovable picture.

A symbol is fundamentally different. It can never be exhausted by a sign of equality; it is never disposed of by adducing one relationship. It is much more pregnant, teaming with meanings; such meanings as can be expressed and such as can rarely be definitely expressed; in fact, even such as evade even silent surmise. Just as the world-principles of which I spoke at the beginning of the lecture, symbols are the points of intersection where many lines of thought meet,—foci of mind and phenomena in the cosmos. They are like suns from which rays of significance emanate. Or like the full blown buds of a plant whose roots, spread out in all directions in the soil, bring to it nutrient juices from all about and concentrate the creative elements in the blossom; when it opens it frgrantly unfolds its wonders and the scholar may explain petal after petal though he too is amazed at the never-ending wealth thus exposed. A symbol is also distinguished by a more intimate connection with the thing it represents, a connection which is not so close in the case of the allegory: in the former it is more necessary, in the latter more accidental; the former grows organically—it was not for nothing that I chose the image of a plant—out of its object; the latter is more conventionally or artificially constructed. (To prevent misunderstanding I must say that I do not mean to imply that the ritualism of freemasonry is replete only with pure symbols, and that I know that allegory too has some part in it.) Finally, another characteristic of a symbol is its momentary concreteness: the entire complex

of the thoughts, the allusions and the ideas to be expressed, must be concentrated in one relatively simple sign,—we thus again come back to the word "abbreviation."

It seems advisable to quote some of the ideas expressed by Friedrich Creuzer in his work on 'symbolism and the mythology of ancient races,' a book written in a romantic spirit; but I would not be understood as approving of all he says. He designates the symbolic as at once the root and the highest manifestation of figurative expression. Very different things were formerly included under the terms 'symbol' and 'symbolic.' But all these meanings "may easily be derived from the first definition of the verb 'sumballein,' namely, 'to join something that is separated,' and thence the very simple concept of 'sumbolon' as a 'compound.' However, for the higher meaning of the word 'sumbolon' one must bear in mind two other meanings of the verb, viz.: (1) 'to meet,' 'to encounter,' especially 'to meet unexpectedly'; and (2) 'to guess from hidden indications',—the more so as the failure to keep these considerations in mind has resulted in an utterly false conception of the symbolism of religious ceremonials." An allegorical representation "denotes only a general notion or an idea that is different from the idea itself; the symbolic is the sensible, concrete embodiment of the idea itself. In the former we have a substitution, in the latter the idea itself has descended into the realm of the corporeal and in the picture we see it itself and see it directly." In an instant and utterly, an idea merges in a symbol and seizes upon all our psychic energies. It is a beam that shoots up in a straight line out of the dark soil of being and thinking, strikes upon the eye and permeates our entire being." In symbols conciseness and the elements of the necessary predominate; allegory inclines to ornate diffusiveness, to untrammelled development of the "playfulness of fantasy."

A symbol has to comply with certain requirements. First of all, clearness. "And yet this demand seems to contradict itself inasmuch as it threatens to destroy the very essence of the symbol. For it is true, as was recognised even by the ancients, that the essence of the symbol partakes of the darkness as well as of the twilight; how then can it deny its nature and yet be clear? Inasmuch as the symbol aims at reproducing in the image what no image has or the divine in a superlative idea, the full sunlight of the divine beam will not be capable of radiating unsullied. The twilight . . . of its expression will surely betray its earthly origin. But inasmuch as it, on the other hand, strives to free itself from the earthly and to soar to the celestial, it easily rises above itself if it wholly disregards the laws ascribed to it. Therefore that requirement is intended only to recall these laws of nature. . . The symbol will and should suggest the divine but . . . it should speak to the senses simply. "This second requirement is brevity. Beauty and charm will be added to it in the sphere of the artistic. If superior knowledge is to be expressed then the symbol must, above all, be **"significant"** and less concerned about being pleasing. "The more it cherishes this sacred demand, the greater is the tendency to be unintelligible until in extreme cases it finally becomes an embodied rebus. This is the case with a large part of the total temple symbolism of ancient Greece and Rome. How often has it not happened that a really

significant temple image admitted several interpretations! This is true to a still higher degree of genuinely mystical symbols."

If, in accordance with our avowed intention, we investigate the origin of symbols, we must make two distinctions. One may first inquire whence the symbols now extant—as, for example, those of freemasonry—were derived; where were they formerly to be met with in history? That is the question of their source. Different from this, and to be carefully borne in mind, even though it is only rarely solved historically, is the question of the first origin, the question of how it came into being. We shall consider both these questions. That they merge into one another is apparent as soon as we think of these three possibilities: an image may at once assume a symbolic character; it may become a symbol in time; the symbol may develop, grow.

The beginnings of the purest type of symbol may be thought of psychologically in the following manner: each mind possesses a certain power of comprehension which is dependent upon its general cultural niveau and upon the particular individual's general or temporary condition. I call this power "capacity." If it should happen that a mind is grappling with some problem or idea that transcends its capacity, it cannot grasp the intangible idea logically or abstractly, cannot (or cannot yet) conceive it discursively [i.e., cannot definitely formulate it in words]. The idea may affect him as a kind of vague surmise; if his fantasy is active it will bring before his mind's eye an image: the symbol. A concrete image entails less psychic effort than a discursive presentation. That is why an image presents itself every time the individual capacity is inadequate to deal with a difficult idea.

Two simple examples, chosen from the large amount of material at my disposal from my studies of dreams, may make this clear. It must be borne in mind that the mental capacity may be weakened even temporarily and that consequently mental tasks with which the individual is otherwise capable of dealing are temporarily too much for him. This occurs in states of fatigue, from certain toxic influences, during sleep and in states of somnolence. Images that appear to many persons in the somnolence preceding sleep, the so-called hypnagogic (sleep-introducing) hallucinations, are especially appropriate material with which to illustrate this phenomenon. I shall narrate two instances from my own experiences. In both instances I am "thinking", fatigue overwhelms me, and, presto! instead of the thought I was thinking there stands before my mind's eye an image, a symbol of the idea occupying my mind; under the influence of the paralysing power of fatigue, idea is transformed into material the psyche can grasp more easily. Now let me give the first example:

I witnessed a performance of Goethe's "Faust," Part II. After going to bed, I continue to think about the poem. Notwithstanding the paralysing influence of sleepiness, fascinated by the wonderful problems embodied in "Faust." I seek to penetrate in to the dark sphere of the "mothers"-problem, a problem that has given so much trouble to the commentators. In my struggle with sleepiness the latter gets the upper hand; the thread of my abstract thoughts is suddenly broken and the idea is replaced by the following hallucination: I am standing

upon a lonely rocky jetty which projects far out into a dark sea; the waters of the sea merge in the distant horizon into the dim, heavy and mysterious sky. The plastic vividness of the image, the abruptness of its appearance, surprises me and I become wide awake. The image disappears; I again recall my train of thought and recognize that the vision I saw was a symbol for it. How is this to be explained? My lonely position, far removed from human affairs and the cares of every-day life, refers to the remoteness of the problem, while the dark coloring of the vision points to the obscurity (darkness) of the problem. The unending, eternal, inexhaustible sea expresses the magnitude of the riddle. The merging of sea and sky, the annulment of the boundary between above and below, indicate that for "mothers" alltimes and places merge into one another, that for them there are no distinctions between a "here" and a "there" and that consequently Mephistopheles can well say to the departing Faust, as he hands him the mysterious key: "Sink, then! but I could as well say 'arise!' " Nor must we forget the motherly character of the ocean as the mysterious lap of an extremely varied life, and the mythic-philosophical conception of water as the source of all things.

And now for our second example: In a very sleepy condition I think to myself: to form a correct judgment in a controversy, the views of both sides must be considered objectively. So thinking, this vision presents itself: I am holding my hands over the outline of two dark, indefinable and oscillating masses. A beautiful glass vessel in the form of a bon-bon dish is being put into my hands.—Explanation: The outline is the dispute between the parties in controversy. The masses moving toward each other are indefinable and dark, inasmuch as the opinions of both parties are one-sided, lacking in clearness and ruffled by passion. To form a clear judgment one must rise above the parties. That is why I hold my hands above the oscillating masses. But my hands are like those of a judge: they can break the staff over one of the disputants; they can also bless; with reference to the vessel they remind me of "washing in innocence," a washing that visualizes non-contamination by the admixture of passion that sullies. But my hands are also seeking for something; they are stretched out to receive something. In contrast with value mass under me I am seeking a pure, clear judgment. In reality this is the reward of one who stands above disputants. A vessel is being put in my hands; a beautiful vessel made of glass; glass is transparent: the perfect, clear judgment that is pronounced against the parties. To some extent the vessel contains the destiny that is poured over them from a cornucopia or a mystical crater. Incidentally I shall divulge, for the sake of completeness, why the thing laid in my hands took the form of a bon-bonniére. It could just as well have been a cup or some similar object. The bon-bonniére may be said to be the accidental element in the picture, the element that is not essential to the picture. It was due to a trifling incident shortly before. I had sent a lady a cup-shaped glass bonbonniére. The recency of the recollection alone would hardly have brought the image into the symbol if it had not happened that the bonbonniére episode was related to a "conflict of the parties." I had sent that dish to one of two sisters each of whom thought I preferred her before the other; there was a rivalry between them; I am the one to decide and the bonbonniére as-

a token of attentiveness (besides it contains sweets!) is the embodiment of my verdict.

We see, then, how diversely intertwined the various trains of thought in a symbolic image are,—how saturated (so to say) such an image is. This characteristic of the symbol may be much more readily demonstrated by the aid of dreams than by hypnagogic hallucinations; but we are not therefore justified in looking upon every image occurring in a dream as a true "symbol," for, even admitting the complexity of dream images, they may be lacking in some of the characteristics essential to a symbol. But I have already gone too far into subtleties of differentiation to think of imposing upon my auditors an explanation of the psychology of dreams, to which I had referred only by way of illustration. I hasten therefore to resume the thread of my discourse. With reference to the nature and the general origin of symbols, there remains to be considered only the transition from individual psychology to ethnic psychology.

Before all else it must be remembered that whereas the hallucinations above described were conditioned by temporary diminutions of mental capacity, this capacity may, even at its best, and hence permanently, be insufficient to grasp an especially lofty or complicated idea. Such is the case, mentioned above, when an idea first dawns on one. And just as ideas "dawn" in our personal experiences, so do they "dawn," with even greater richness of image, in the slow evolution of the ethnic mind, of humanity. The dawning great idea does not announce itself in the abstract forms that mark mental mastery, but in symbols—in pledges of its presence. This "epiphany" in images is usually referred to as the "mythological period in human knowledge." Well-established images do not disappear; on the contrary, they serve to indicate the progress of the mind by the advance in its ability to comprehend them. There are numerous ideas and symbols which the mind, no matter how much its capacity has grown, can never exhaust. To these supreme symbols Creuzer's ideas, expressed approximately as follows, apply excellently:

If the soul in its evolution would raise itself to the world of ideas and make the pictorial, the figurative, serve as the expression for the infinite, a conflict at once manifests itself. How can something that is limited become the vessel and container of the unlimited? Or the sensory be the deputy of that which, beyond the scope of the senses, can be known only as pure thought? The soul, caught in this contradiction, and perceiving it, finds itself at first thrown into a state of yearning. It would comprehend this essence entire and unaltered, and give it life in form; but this essence will not accommodate itself to the limitations of form. Painful is the longing to give birth to the infinite in the finite. The soul, set in the darkness of this nether-world of ours, fain would rise and force its way out into the full glory of bright day. The spirit yearns to behold that which alone is real and unchanging, to see it stripped of its covering, and to set up its image in this mutable world of shadowy existence. Inasmuch then as the soul, thus regarded, oscillates between the world of ideas and the domain of the senses, inasmuch as it strives to unite these two and to attain the infinite in the finite, how can it be other than that it should bear within itself both

what it strove for and what it attained—the marks of its origin—and betray in its essences its dual nature? And, as a matter of fact, the essential characteristics of symbols do give evidences of this dual origin. At first, this very oscillation is the lot of the symbol, this indeterminateness between form and being. In the symbol has arisen a general conception that comes and goes, withdrawing from our scrutiny as soon as we try to seize it. Just as, on the other hand, the symbol, emanating from the world of ideas, as if shed by the sun in full glory, may be said to be "sun-like" (to employ a Platonic metaphor), so, on the other, it is obscured by the medium through which it reaches our eyes. And as the prismatic lines of the rainbow result from the image of the sun being shattered against the dark clouds, so in a symbol the simple light of an idea is split up into a many-colored ray of significance.

In the foregoing I referred to the dawning symbol as the pledge of an idea. The better the symbol is understood, the more thoroughly the diffused is focussed, the nearer, in the course of time, is human understanding brought to the idea itself. We may, then, conceive the symbol as a cup full of promise, filled at first with a turgid, then with an ever purer drink—invigorating poison from celestial streams. Such is the highest type of symbol. And freemasonry is rich in images of this sort.

[*To be Continued*]

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# Psychology, Language and the Ideal of Exact Science

*By Dr. J. Marcinowski*

**Bad Heilbrunn**

Psychology is about to be provided with a new mouthpiece in the form of a new journal, "Psyche and Eros." On the eve of this event it seems fitting that we consider the special and peculiar difficulties which confront all writers in this field. I refer not only to that natural resistance which public opinion offers, repeating on a grand scale the resistance each patient displays—a resistance which is offered to any self-knowledge involving pain and self-depreciation and which can be overcome only by a sincere desire for self-knowledge and for progress; I refer rather to a much more fundamental difficulty—the difficulty involved in seeking to communicate by language that for which language is unfortunately inadequate. It is most important that we arrive, sooner or later, at a thorough understanding of this difficulty; and in this connection it will be useful to mark off somewhat more clearly than has heretofore been done the boundaries of that province of investigation which we call psychology; for there is still abroad under this flag too much that might more properly be called brain-physiology and sense-organ-physiology.

Ever since the young science of the Freudian school began publishing the results of its investigations, we psychanalysts have been confronted with the charge that neither our spoken nor our written reports possesses the least claim to having proved anything logically. To be sure, we have succeeded in gaining friends, and these friends have not failed in their support of us; but we have won this support because of an inner readiness on their part to give it and not because we have demonstrated our theses. This state of affairs is due to the fact that the subject-matter involved is of such a nature that the method of scientific experiment, of weighing and measuring—in short, of logic and system, cannot conquer it; for this subject matter belongs to a world whose secrets cannot be extorted with the jacks and screws which are so successful in winning the secrets of the material and the definitively ordered world—the ponderable and tangible world of physics and physiology.

Let it then be admitted, once and for all, that psychic phenomena are living structures which can be viewed from within only, but cannot be comprehended through the clear medium of reason. Even these terms—"phenomena" and "structures"—are essentially false and misleading when applied to the spiritual and the psychic, in other words, to psychology. But language has no other term to offer. "Phenomena" and "flux" are terms really applicable only to occurrences of a material nature, and "structure" can be conceived only in terms of a spatial, optical perspective. Structures are things that have been constructed, products. Psychology, however, is concerned with that which constructs, with that which is related to structure as content is to the form in which it manifests itself and becomes perceptible, objectively comprehensible. In brief, language is an inadequate vehicle for the immediate communication of psychological experiences, and useful only to the extent that it is **symbolical**:. for the symbol is the sole form of expression by means of which the psychological can be communicated. Let it be clearly understood: **communicated and transmitted, but demonstrated never.**

Psychology is intrinsically undemonstrable, for what goes on in the living flux of becoming obeys other laws, other necessities than those which rule in the realm of matter. As soon as we attempt to express a psychological experience in scientific forms, we lift this experience out of the realms of the immediate, the unconscious, into that of the sophisticating reason, and straightway a fateful living stir is transformed into a pseudo-lifelike, rigid mechanism with all those logical and unambiguous causual implications that are so alien to the nature of the psychic.

The impossibility of communicating psychic experience with demonstrative validity (or, if you prefer, our inability so to do), was granted by the psychanalytic school when it enunciated the maxim that in general psychanalysis can be experienced only if the student submits to an analysis. It is not to be learned from books; at best it is accessible in this way to very few only. Psychology, in other words, can only be experienced; it cannot be taught directly. It can be communicated to another only by way of his self. Good! An adequate experience of this sort may be attained by way of a printed presentation, as well as in other ways; but the process is then totally different from assimilating

the logically demonstrable explanations of the exact natural sciences or of systematic philosophy. Had we recognized this fact clearly from the beginning, we should not have been so moved to wonder that exact science has assumed so fundamentally hostile and so unscientifically scornful an attitude, seeing that we find all about us in the works of dramatists and novelists the same facts that we enunciate, vividly comprehend, and—oddly enough—accepted by these same men of exact science without those inner resistances which make them inaccessible to us. The work of art as a symbol was able to communicate a psychic something which we labored in vain to transmit by the inappropriate language of exact science.

However, it was our proposal to apply inner experience as a principle of investigation that aroused the greatest storm of indignation. Thus, for example, in the reviews of one of my more considerable works it was declared that by this work I had placed myself on an even footing with spiritists and faith-healers since these, too, substitute inner certainty and intensity of feeling for logical proof— a procedure which nullifies all the principles of exact science. If the point of view of these critics be admitted, this objection is comprehensible enough, especially if one is alive to the nature of the innermost stress from which exact science takes its origin, of which it is a symbol: namely, an apprehensive uneasiness in the presence of everything which is intangible and mysterious and which therefore simply cannot be **permitted** to exist—an urge which prefers to reduce the spiritual-psychic world to a rigid mechanism of association-elements and seeks to conceive it as a product of the most exquisitely refined mechanistic processes, in the uncertain expectation that the great question-mark, which remains despite all, will be made to grow ever smaller by virtue of an ever more exquisite mechanistic insight. As though it were possible even to attempt the solution of the riddle of life with such assumptions!—the riddle which arouses in the mechanistic philosopher a fear so profound and disturbing that in his opposition to views which seek to do justice to life he loses his grip in the emotional and discreditable manner hinted at above, much like one who in dire extremity is able to employ only absurdly incommensurable weapons.

Thus the difficulties in the way of a mutual understanding loom up as no less than fundamental differences in philosophies of life **(Weltanschauungen)**; indeed, it has been my experience recently to hear a scientific debate cut short—very properly—with the words: "Let us terminate the discussion, for it is quite clear that we are here concerned with the difference between a materialistic and a vitalistic philosophy, and it is therefore of course hopeless to attempt an understanding."

However, it is important that we seek to penetrate more and more deeply into the implications of our point of view and to express this point of view more and more clearly. No less than exact science, psychanalysis must concern itself, obviously, with tangible effects, with the forms in which life expresses itself. But even these are for psychanalysis merely the expressive modes of the psychic content which manifests itself in them, whereas exact science declines to have anything at all to do with these airy structures. Thus the essential point is that behind the form, behind the expression, behind the appearance, we seek

the content, that is (let us admit it calmly), behind the material-spatial the spiritual, behind the physical the psychic; and in this connection we should never forget that in the realm of material, mechanistic occurrences there is given only the **mode and manner** in which something happens, but that the something which happens there is spiritual-psychic and of a wholly different nature. In other words we make a sharp distinction, just as did old Baruch Spinoza when in the single substance he discerned two attributes: thought and extension,—in other words, the realm of the spiritual-psychic and the realm of the spatial-material.

Let us try to make this distinction a little more vivid by setting these attributes in sharper contrast to one another. Here lies a work of mine, completed. Prior to this work came its creation as its cause, and in this there was a psychic something, the creative, the urge. The driving power in the urge **(das drängende im Drang)**—that is the province of psychology: which becomes manifest during the realization, and fixed in the realized. We are concerned then with the sense in what is said, and not with the brain-physiology of sounds; with that which understands and recognizes in thinking and in remembering, not with association-processes and logical sequences; with the entrance into consciousness of the sensory, not with the condition; with the life in the living, with the personality, not with the organism,—in short, with the intangible in the tangibleness of material phenomena. Not, therefore, with the chain of cause and effect, not with the external accidents of this strictly determined continuity, not with the surface of this purely external occurrence, but with its depths, its inwardness, its fatality, its direction, with its immanent purposiveness, its will-toward-a-goal: for nothing psychic is ever causally determined but always finally directed. All activity is causally determined only in its transpiration; at bottom, however, it is the revelation of a goal. Reduced to what is perhaps a very superficial formula, all activity is either the avoidance of pain or the obtainment of pleasure; this may possibly be the simplest finality inherent in material phenomena. But psychanalysis teaches above all else that the finality of the psychologically tangible is always direction, always in some fashion "tendency," and always permits an intention, an inclination, to become manifest! that the corporeal can serve only as a means and as a tool by means of which a purposive elaboration of all life-impulses is revealed. A psychological conception of things can never rest content with a flat Darwinian form-alteration. From such a point of view, every change is an evolution in Goethe's sense—an ascent or a descent. In brief, the psychic is always the intangibly alive of which all other occurrence is but the expression, the form. That which we hope to discern and investigate consists exclusively in psychic direction as such, in the psychogenesis of all the forms of life; we seek to reveal nothing but the inner sense, the unconscious and extra-conscious motives of our behavior, our choice of goals, and of the means to these goals, as these grow out of our inner necessity.

We seek to gain clues to the laws appertaining to these findings by tracing back their operation as far as may be possible until we obtain for our innermost feeling a sympathetic understanding **(mitschwingendes Verstehen)** of that which is called law, being, character. It

is, of course, obvious enough that psychanalysis must not neglect the fact that the forms in which the spiritual expresses itself reflect not only a psychic content but also the structure of the body's means of expression: for this very substratum of matter upon which psychic occurence is enacted may, by virtue of a generative disease or some variety of intoxication, impose its own laws upon the psychic modes of expression; nor should the bold line that we, for the sake of emphasizing a specific point of view, have here drawn between psychology and physiology cause us to overlook the fact that in the world of definitively transpired phenomena both the distorted forms as well as the healthy form reflect the laws of this latter world as well; but we must not fail to remember the psyche, too, is something like a living organism, which grows, develops, decays, and passes away, and which may be weak or strong or sick.

It is, therefore, indeed a totally different mentality by which we psychologists are dominated, and in terms of which we think and speak. And therefore we speak intelligibly only for those who have ears to hear, for those who, by virtue of personal inner experience, are capable of a minimum of sympathetic vibration **(Mitschwingen)**. For all others, that which we have to say must remain mere idle talk, even though we proffer them the deepest and most precious truths in the clearest of crystal bowls. The world of the spiritual, which remains locked from them because "their minds are sealed, their hearts are dead," need not therefore be a world of spiritistic and allied content, no matter how sharply we contrast it with the world of exact learning. For that matter, a work of art yields its wealth of revelation only to those to whom it is given to experience it in their innermost selves—and psychology, as it happens, is not "something to eat!" But there are many whose minds are so constituted that they can operate only with the perceptible and the tangible. Once again I should like to indicate how difficult it is to do justice to our task by means of language. In vain do we resort to the circumstantial, the detailed. No one has as yet been able to give us an adequate picture of the ebb and flow of the changing play of the emotions in a single hour's session with the physician. No one has ever been able to relate a dream so that his auditor has felt even approximately the same picture evoked within him. And never will it be possible to transmit to a second or third person or even to a reader the evidential experience of an innermost certainty (which excludes all chance of suggestion) such as accompanies, for example, the successful analysis of a dream. The most faithful scientific report must remain helpless in the face of such material; every attempt at an artistic portrayal will seem unscientific and novelistic. And yet, when we remember how readily artists are credited with psychological insight, and how hospitably their renditions are received, and with what irrelevant affectivity such portrayals are practically forbidden the physician, we will not, because we recognize the difficulties, halt in our endeavors to communicate our discoveries at the boundary behind which the method of exact science frequently enough lapses into sterility, nor will we be timorous because future criticism may on occasion thrust aside our scientific labors as fictive compositions and mythical interpretations.

*(Translated by Gustav F. Schulz)*

# Psychanalytic Gleanings from Shakspere

By Samuel A. Tannenbaum

## I

That the psychanalytic principles and technique can be interestingly and profitably applied to the study of literature, to the elucidation of the hidden meanings of great works of art, to the discovery of the secret springs that prompted to their composition, and to the deeper and obscure sources of the readers' pleasure, has been abundantly demonstrated in numerous analyses of literary works of great and lesser repute. With an exquisite appropriateness which must appeal even to the most unimaginative, the first application of Freud's dream- theory to the solution of a psychological problem in literature was Freud's explanation, the best that has yet been given, of the Hamlet mystery. In his "Traumdeutung" the greatest psychologist of modern times plucks out the heart of the great mystery created by the greatest poet-psychologist of all time. As might have been anticipated, so illustrious a lead was eagerly followed by a host of Freud's disciples, so that now we have quite a large body of literature of this kind.

It will be noted Shakespere's works have attracted the psychanalysts more than any other works of fiction. This is as it should be. Shakspere was unquestionably the most gifted intuitive psychologist that ever set pen to paper. Great though he was in technique, in dramaturgy, in the gift of harmonious utterance, in the reaches of his imagination, in vivid portrayal of passion, he was god-like in his understanding of human nature. His works, more than those of any other writer, therefore offer inexhaustible and invaluable mines for the psychologist's labors. In the following pages we shall not attempt the analysis or elucidation of any single work in the Shakspere canon or a psychanalytic study of the poet himself but the less ambitious task of culling out from his works illustrations of the simpler Freudian mechanisms, instances of the workings of the Unconscious as illustrated in such momentary lapses in mental functioning as slips of the tongue, forgetting, losing things, etc. Apart from the inherent interest attaching to such an investigation, our task has at least two advantages over some of the more ambitious analyses catalogued above: it is more convincing to the beginner in psychanalysis and to those wholly ignorant of it, and is less likely to arouse such persons' resistances and hostility to this new science.

## II

Shakspere, like many others, poets and novelists, e. g., Meredith, with the intuition characteristic of genius, understood unconsciously the psychology of slips of the tongue, and now and then introduced one into his plays very effectively. In "As You Like It" (iv. 3, 132), the wicked but repentant Oliver, describing to the disguised shepherds, Rosalind and Celia, how Orlando, single-handed, had given battle to a hungry lioness that he might save from certain death his cruel and unnatural brother (Oliver), betrays his identity by a slip of the tongue. Carried away by his own emotion in the narration of the stirring en-

counter, in which he always speaks of himself in the third person, Oliver exclaims: "in which hurtling [i. e., turmoil] from miserable slumber I awak'd." This self-betrayal facilitates the forward movement of the play and does away with the necessity of a formal introduction. Oliver is freed from the psychic tension accompanying the indulgence in one train of thought (the narrative) while repressing another (his identity). The pleasure-loving, tension-shunning Foreconscious terminates the conflict by divulging what the speaker seeks to conceal. (In one of the tales of Margaret of Navarre there is a similar betrayal of identity by a slip of the tongue).

A little later in the same play (iv. 3, 159), Rosalind (Ganymede), Celia's supposed brother, swoons at the sight of the napkin dyed in her lover's blood; thereupon Celia, greatly alarmed, and forgetting the rôle Rosalind is playing, exclaims: **"Cousin!"** but suddenly realizing her mistake she seeks to correct it by exclaiming, "Ganymede!" Some editors, forgetting that Rosalind is posing as Celia's brother, and ignorant of the psychology of slips of the tongue, say there is no "lapsus linguae" here and that "cousin" is "used loosely" as often by Shakspere, in the sense of "niece, nephew, brother-in-law, and grandchild." They indicate this in their text by reading "Cousin Ganymede!" instead of, as Johnson suggested, "Cousin—— Ganymede!"

In "Othello," the hero, consumed with jealousy, seeks to control his passion and show a calm exterior while reading the letter from the Venetian senate ordering his recall; but so overwhelmed is he with anger on hearing Desdemona speak of her "love for Cassio" that he cannot contain himself and bursts out (IV, 1, 229) with the words, "Fire and brimstone!" before he is aware of it, thus betraying to us the volcanic passion that is raging within him. This is, of course, also true of his exclamation (IV, 1, 222), "Are you sure of that?" when his unsuspecting wife says to her kinsman that he "shall make all well" between her husband and Cassio. These slips of his prepare us for the utter loss of self-control that manifests itself when he strikes Desdemona a few minutes later. His pent-up passion must find a vent or precipitate him into another epilectic spell—which would be poor craftsmanship on the poet's part and enlist our sympathies in Othello's behalf (instead of Desdemona's), would puzzle the senate, and would confuse the issues.

An admirable instance of a slip of the tongue occurs in "Twelfth Night" (II, 5, 62). Malvolio, the priggish and conceited Steward, sitting in the orchard, is indulging in a typical day-dream of future greatness. In his mind's eye he sees himself married to the Lady Olivia and revels in the fantasy of lording it over those who have incurred his displeasure. He imagines himself ordering Sir Toby, his pet aversion, to be brought before him. "Seven of my people," says he, "with an obedient start make out for him; I frown the while, and perchance wind up my watch, or play with my—some rich jewel." The dash after "my" does not occur in the Folio, and some modern editors omit it, interpreting "my some rich jewel" to mean "some rich jewel of mine." Daniel, realizing that "my some rich jewel" is not English, suggested changing the words "my some" to "my handsome," and Dyce proposed omitting the word "my" as an accidental repetition resulting from the preceding "my watch." Collier introduced the dash, and explained the passage

thus: "Malvolio, after mentioning his watch, wants to mention some other jewelled ornament, but is unable to think of one at the moment and therefore merely says "some rich jewel." Nicholson, retaining Collier's dash, explains the passage in a manner which, as Furness says, "carries instant and complete conviction." He says: "There is here a true touch of nature and a most humorous one. While Sir Toby is being fetched to the presence, the Lord Malvolio would frowningly wind up his watch or play with—and here from force of habit he fingers [the chain about his neck, his badge of office], and is about to add 'play with my chain,' but suddenly remembering that [if he married Olivia] he would be no longer a steward, or other gold-chained attendant, he stops short, and then confusedly [covers up his slip of the tongue and] alters his phrase to—'some rich jewel.'" The watch may, by association, have suggested the chain.

A striking and significant slip of the tongue, which has not escaped the critics, occurs in "Macbeth" (I. 5, 34—ed. Furness). Lady Macbeth, her mind occupied with murderous thoughts awakened by her husband's letter, is impatiently and tigress-like pacing her room when one of her servants enters and announces the coming of the King. In her then state of mind it would have been madness for the King knowingly to put himself in her power. The shock of surprise momentarily robs her of her self-control and she bursts out: "Thou'rt mad to say it." Then, fearing that she has betrayed to the servant what is beating in her brain, she adds: "Is not thy master with him? who, wer't so, would have inform'd for preparation."

In "The Tempest" (III. 1, 36-37) the charming, innocent, love-infected Miranda in an unguarded moment betrays her name— which she was forbidden to reveal—to her equally infected lover by as pretty a **lapsus linguae** as may be found anywhere in literature.

## III

Early in 1910, Dr. Otto Rank announced that he had discovered a slip of the tongue in one of Shakspere's plays. In "The Merchant of Venice" (III. 2, 3-18), he says, there is an instance of a **lapsus linguae** determined by "the disturbing influence of a suppressed thought," namely, in Portia's speech to Bassanio just before he chooses the casket that is to determine his fate. Portia, perfectly happy in her love, is content to have Bassanio "peize the time, eke it out and draw it out in length, to stay him from election"; but he, impatient and impetuous adventurer—and needy, too—is bent on getting through with the business. To her the result means either eternal misery or eternal happiness; to him the gain or loss of a fortune—and a wife. Under these circumstances she addresses him as follows:

> "Forbear a while!—
> There's something tells me—but *it is not love*—
> *I would not lose you;* and you know yourself,
> *Hate counsels not in such a quality.*
> But—lest you should not understand me well—
> *I would detain you here* some month or two
> Before you venture for me. I could teach you
> How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;

So [i. e. forsworn] will I never be; so may you miss me;
But if you do, *you'll make me wish a sin,*
*That I had been forsworn.*—Beshrew your eyes,
They have o'erlook'd [= bewitched] me, and divided me;
One half of me is yours,—th' other half *yours,*
Mine own, I would [= should] say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours."

Commenting on the above passage, Dr. Rank says: "[Portia] would like to tell [Bassanio] that even in the event of failure, he should be assured of her love; but is prevented from doing so by her solemn promise to her father." In this mental discord she addresses her suitor with the words quoted and makes a slip of the tongue in the third line from the bottom. According to Rank, Portia meant to say: "One-half of me is **yours,** the other half **mine,"** but her tongue slipped into saying "the other half **yours."** He continues. "What she intended only to hint at remotely, because she ought really not to have said anything about it, namely, that she loves him and is **wholly** his even before he chooses, the poet— with admirable psychologic insight—allows to leak out in a slip of the tongue and by this device manages to allay the unbearable uncertainty of the lover and the distressing tension of the audience as to the outcome of the selection."

Dr. Rank's rendering of Portia's meaning proves not only that he is not familiar with the play but that he has not rightly conceived the heroine's character, is not acquainted with Shakspere's language and knows very little of the poet's technique. This is true not only of Dr. Rank but of Jones (who quotes it in his book), Freud (who quotes it in his "Vorlesungen") and others who have accepted his interpretation. There is absolutely nothing in the play to warrant Rank's assertion that Portia was prevented by a solemn promise to her father from assuring Bassanio, or anyone else, of her love. She was forbidden only to choose for herself or to betray the location of her "counterfeit presentment."

There is no slip of the tongue, accidental or intentional, in Portia's disclosure of the conflict between her love and her determination to continue loyal to her father's behest. It is impossible to read her words and not find in them a frank admission of her love. She makes no attempt to conceal the true state of her emotions. This love of hers is too serious a matter for trifling; with her earnestness and sincerity, she raises the choice of the caskets to the dignity of a solemn religious ceremony, and thus justifies (if anything **can** justify it) her father's strange injunction. It is true, she says "it is not love"; but who that has a heart does not feel that the words, spoken with arch playfulness, mean the direct opposite of what they purport? Then, as if fearing that Bassanio's masculine stupidity in such matters might not interpret her aright ("lest you should not understand me well"), and as if reproaching herself for not having told the truth, and perhaps for having caused him a moment's pain, she assures him that **"hate** counsels not in such a quality." Any actress who has a feeling for her business, and every reader that has but half a heart and a little imagination, would read the line in question: "One-half of me is yours,—th' other **half . . yours."** Portia, having just confessed that her lover's eyes had betwitched and divided her, speaks as if she meant her lover to think that she retained

one-half of herself for herself, but—with a sudden ebullition of her love and with a complete self-surrender—she frankly admits that she is wholly his; one-half of me is yours,—the other half—is also yours. In this way we rise to a climax from her preliminary "it is not love" to her culminating "all yours." Dr. Rank was probably misled in his interpretation by taking the words "I would say" to mean "I intended to say" instead of "I should [or ought to] say"—a meaning that the word "would" often had in Shakspere's day. Incidentally it may be remarked that the tension of the audience (or reader) is in no danger of breaking. Those who have read this play carefully and are acquainted with Shakspere's technique know that Portia's approval of Nerissa's praises of Bassanio, and a few other touches in the first two acts, sufficiently apprise the audience of the fact that Bassanio is destined to choose the right casket.

## IV

In "Coriolanus" (I. 9, 18-92), one of the longest of Shakspere's plays, we are treated to one of the most interesting instances of a momentary lapse of memory to be found anywhere in English literature. That the reader may be able to follow our argument we reproduce here as much of the scene as appertains to the incident in question:

*"Mar.* The gods begin to mock me. I, that now
Refus'd most princely gifts, am bound to beg
Of my lord general.
*"Com.* Take't; 't is yours. What is't?
*"Mar.* I sometime lay here in Corioles
*At a poor man's house;* he us'd me kindly.—
He cry'd to me; I saw him prisoner,
But then Aufidius was within my view
And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity. I request you
To give *my poor host* freedom.
*"Com.* Oh, well begg'd!
Were he the butcher of my son, he should
Be free as is the wind.—Deliver him, Titus!
*"Lar.* Marcius, his name?
*"Mar.* By Jupiter, forgot!—
I'm weary; yea, my memory is tir'd.—
Have we no wine here?"

Why has Shakspere introduced into this long play such an apparently trivial incident as his hero's begging for the life of a prisoner whose name he forgets? Most of the editors and commentators point out the fact that Shakspere found this incident in his original, in North's translation of Plutarch. Deighton regards the incident as an indication of Coriolanus's "tenderness of heart." Gervinus also looks upon it as an indication of one of the "good" traits in the hero's character, a "fit of feeling in a god of stone." As far as I can find, only two editors have noted the fact that the dramatist departed from "his original" in making Coriolanus forget the name of his kind host. Reference to Plutarch's **Life of Coriolanus** shows that the poet did depart from history in the matter referred to. Plutarch does not, it is true, give us the name of the Volsce whom Corolianus recognized in the heat of battle, and whose liberation he would have demanded had not at that moment his pity been overwhelmed by wrath at the sight of his great enemy—Aufidius. But neither is there anything in Plutarch to lead one to infer that Coriolanus failed to remember the name of his benefactor. Assuming—and

it is an assumption that we have every right to make—that so skilful an artist as Shakspere knew what he was about when he adopted anything from his sources and that he did not reject or retain anything hap-hazard, it becomes an interestisg question why he departed from Plutarch in his version of this incident. It will be noted that Marcius attributes his defect of memory to fatigue ("I'm weary; yea, my memory is tir'd"). But it can hardly be believed that Shakspere meant to tell us no more than that his hero was tired after the exploits of the day or that loss of blood impaired his memory. This stirring speech that Corolianus delivers before his General, and his demeanor throughout the scene after the battle, contradict his theory of mental fatigue. Besides, fatigue alone cannot obliterate the names of our friends and benefactors from our memory. Why, then, does Shakspere, while following his original so closely as to expose himself to the charge of plagiarism, depart from it in such an apparently trivial matter as the remembering or forgetting of the name of an insignificant Volscian? That Shakspere did so is sufficient proof that the matter is not trivial, is not insignificant.

The question for us is: 'why does Coriolanus forget the name of his sometime host?' It is evident that he expected to remember the name and that he is chagrined at having forgotten it ("By Jupiter, forgot!"). Can we explain this occurrence? and what, if any, is its significance?

It is one of the fundamental principles of the new psychology that nothing in the domain of mental phenomena happens "by chance," that all our thoughts and actions—even the most apparently insignificant ones—are determined by complex psychic processes. Just as there is no effect without an adequate cause in the physical world, so there is no "accident" in the psychic world. The failure to recollect a name or word that one ought to remember and expects to remember is an imperfection of mental functioning, a slip of the memory, and is not accidental. It is due, our experience teaches, to some unconscious motive, i. e., to a motive of which the individual is not at the time conscious and which can be inferred only from a consideration of all the surrounding circumstances. But of one thing we are certain: that in all such lapses of memory the essential factor is the desire to keep from consciousness something painful or unpleasant to the ego, to exclude from consciousness an idea that may give the individual displeasure.

After this disgression, introduced only for the benefit of those unacquainted with the psychanalytic theories, let us return to the analysis of Coriolanus's lapse of memory. From what he says—"he used me kindly,"—and from what we know of him, his profession, his valor, and his hostility to Aufidius, it seems that at some time he found himself hemmed-in in Corioli and that he owed his escape to the friendly shelter of the Coriolian whose name he had forgotten. It might occur to someone to ask at this point: "If Shakspere followed Plutarch so accurately in this matter why should there be any doubt about this? **Was** Coriolanus indebted to the Volscian and **for what?**" The answer to these questions not only contains the answer to our main query (why Coriolanus forgot the name) but furnishes a striking and extremely interesting illustration of Shakspere's method of work. Let us say at once that, notwithstanding the assertions of the editors and commentators to the

contrary, Shakspere did not lavishly follow Plutarch, but adapted his raw material in accordance with his insight into the souls of men and the requirements of his stage. That the reader may judge for himself, I transcribe the following from Plutarch: "Only this grace (said he) I crave and beseech you to grant me. Among the Volsces there is **an old friend** and host of mine, **an honest wealthy man**, and now a prisoner; who liveth now a poor prisoner, in the hands of his enemies."

Be it noted that in Plutarch the Volscian is "an honest [honorable], wealthy man" and "an old friend" of Coriolanus. Shakspere makes him "a poor man" who had befriended Coriolanus in a time of need. It now becomes apparent, if we bear the character of Coriolanus in mind, why the Volscian's name was forgotten. He was a poor man, a plebeian, and it galled Coriolanus to think that he—the haughtiest and the valiantest of the aristocrats of Rome—was beholden to one of the common people. The poor Volscian's name would have suggested his plebeian origin, and would have awakened Coriolanus's inveterate resentment for the many-headed and rank-scented multitude against whom he can never cease railing. Coriolanus's contempt and prejudice are so deep-rooted that he is blind to every spark of goodness in the common people.

The introduction of Coriolanus's failure to recall the Volscian's name is one of those subtle and magical touches of which none but Shakspere was capable. The common soldiers, the aristocracy and the generals are, for the time being, enamored of the hero of Corioli; his weaknesses are forgotten; his titanic pride, his egoism, his impetuosity, and his contempt for the people are overlooked. Instead of these, they —and we—see only his valor, his honor, his dignity, his physical prowess, his fearlessness, his filial love, his domestic virtues, his lofty mind, his brilliant leadership. To crown all these, the poet shows us his hero's freedom from avarice (in refusing princely gifts), his gratitude for benefits received and his gracious condescension in remembering a commoner. Coriolanus's renunciation of more booty than what he considers his just share, his generous tribute to the many "without note," his modesty, etc., as shown in Act I, and especially in this scene, are well calculated to make us—even the spectators—forget the hero's weaknesses. To guard against this the dramatist ends the scene—the act, we may say—with a subtle reminder of the protagonist's tragic failing —his hatred and scorn of the people. Even at the climax of the portraiture of Coriolanus's better parts, the poet gives those who have the eyes to see a glimpse of his one great weakness. The little slip of the memory is psychologically and dramatically determined.

Shakspere must have even sensed the significance of a paramnesia for in "Hamlet" (II. 2, 431) he very effectively introduces an instance of this kind of lapse. Hamlet, the dilatory avenger of his father's murder, greets the leading man of the strolling players with the request to recite for him a speech which he calls: "Aeneas' tale to Dido," especially that part of it which deals with Priam's slaughter. His interest in that speech is so great, for reasons that I have explained elsewhere (**Studies in Philology**, July 1917), that he does not wait for the actor but begins to recite the speech himself. He begins:

"The rugged Pyrrhus—like the Hyrcanian beast."—But he is not satisfied; something is wrong, he feels; "'tis not so;—it begins with Pyrrhus."—He thinks a little and then goes on; correctly this time:

"The rugged Pyrrhus,—he whose sable arms," etc. Hamlet, we see, has momentarily forgotten the correct text and has substituted for the forgotten words others ("like the Hyrcanian beast") which were not a part of the original speech. To explain this phenomenon, especially the substitution, we must understand Hamlet's attitude toward his task and why the Priam-Pyrrhus Hecuba episode came to his mind. Why he cannot bring himself to do the murder required of him is the Hamlet mystery into the discussion of which we cannot enter now. It is evident that Hamlet identified himself with "young Pyrrhus," that he too found his "antique sword rebellious to his arm, repugnant to command,"—he too, as a painted tyrant, "like a neutral to his will and matter," did nothing until "aroused vengeance set him new a-work." To do a deliberate murder he would have to be as "rugged" (fierce) and "hellish" as Pyrrhus. He, the Wittenberg "scholar," can be neither. The thought of murder, of the murder required of him, is utterly revolting to his nature. If we recollect that to an Elizabethan the Hyrcanian tiger was proverbial of all that is barbarous and savage we can understand the significance of Hamlet's false recollection. His unsconscious judgment of Pyrrhus—and his loathing for the deed—could hardly have been better indicated by the poet.

## V

In "Julius Caesar" and in "Othello" Shakspere offers us two instances of a symptomatic act such as cannot be parallelled in English literature. Critics have long noted that in the former the bragging demigod Caesar is represented as having an "epileptic fit" on one occasion (with temporary deafness of the left ear after it). Several explanations for the introduction of this incident have been given by the commentators,—that it is intended only as a touch of vivid portraiture, that it is a "symbol" of Caesar's obstinacy and refusal to heed the warnings, that it is not to be taken literally, etc. No one, as far as I am aware, has ever thought of asking why Shakspere departs from Plutarch, his "source," in subjecting Caesar to an epileptic fit at the moment of the populace's disapproval of his crowning. So, too, according to Plutarch, Caesar's tearing open his doublet collar and offering his throat to be cut happened on another occasion, among his friends and in his own house. Shakspere's marvellous insight into the workings of the human soul and his mode of working-over his raw materials are strikingly illustrated by his treatment of this so-called "epileptic fit." In his unconscious way he shows us that Caesar really never suffered from genuine epilepsy. Plutarch tells us that Caesar's falling-sickness came on late in life and that the attacks occurred only after great emotional excitement. We now know that Caesar was in reality suffering from a psychoneurosis with pseudo-epileptic fantasies. Stekel has taught us that in these hysterical epilepsies the cause of the attack is an unconscious criminal impulse which the individual will not permit to become conscious and from the recognition of which he escapes by falling into a fit (which gives vent to the repressed energy) and losing consciousness. The fit is the unconscious fantasy-enactment of the criminal act. Caesar's attack proves his covetous desire to be crowned and his hatred of the people for their disapproval of Antony's offering him the crown. This is the meaning of the convulsion and what followed; not that it

shows us that Caesar's fortune is waning or that the gods, too, conspire against him. Caesar's offer of his throat to the rabble and his fear that he may have said something amiss show what was in his mind before he fell.

It is not always an easy matter to distinguish between genuine (organic) epilepsy and pseudo-epilepsy but in the celebrated case we are now discussing the above diagnosis is warranted by the following considerations: the attack occurred by day (true epilepsy usually occurs at night, except in very severe cases); it was preceded by emotional excitement; the loss of consciousness was not complete; the patient recovered consciousness very quickly and knew what had happened; his mind was perfectly clear after the convulsion; he was temporarily deafened on the left ear (a hysterical "conversion" symptom); his attacks began late in life; he was superstitious "of late" and he presented many paranoiac manifestations. That the deafness was on the left side becomes significant when we bear in mind that in the language of the unconscious the left is the wrong, the sinful, the criminal. Antony, Caesar's tempter and flatterer, was on his left side. That's why he says: "Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf, and tell me truly what thou thinkest of him [Cassius]."

Without entering into the debated question whether Othello (in Act IV, Scene 1) merely "Falls in a Traunce" (as the Folio says) or whether he "is falne into an epilepsie," as Iago says, we may say that the manifestation was psychically determined in the Freudian sense. i. e., that it satisfied an unconscious wish. The explanation hitherto deemed sufficient by the critics is either that contained in the following words from Dr. Bucknill: "Othello's mind is to terribly over-wrought [by the thought of Desdemona's infidelity], that it re-acts upon the body until he [falls] into a trance," or that of Sir Joshua Reynolds: "When many confused and very interesting [!] ideas pour in upon the mind all at once, and with such rapidity that it has not time to shape or declare them, if it does not relieve itself by tears (which we know it often does, whether for joy or grief) it produces stupefaction and fainting."

Neither of the above explanations is satisfactory or true to nature. A jumble or helter-skelter of "interesting" ideas does not cause a loss of consciousness. In the case of such painful ideas as those with which Othello was being racked, the sufferer lapses into unconsciousness as an escape from further realization of ideas too painful to bear. But if, as I am inclined to think, Othello's trance was an "epileptic" spell, (a "hystero-epilepsy," in Stekel's sense) the explanation for the phenomenon is the same as that given above for Caesar's fit. It would indicate the upward surge in Othello's mind of ideas of murdering the ill-starred wench, sweet Desdemona. It is to escape this horrible thought that he loses consciousness. The compromise nature of the attack is manifest in the convulsive spasms in which the action-compelling rage is discharged.

## VI

A symbolic act of a different sort which might be thought of as a "slip of the mind," occurs in "Julius Caesar (Act 2, Scene 1). Brutus, the noble Brutus, the idealist and philosopher, he who "sits high in all the people's hearts," opens his meditations, while

awaiting the coming of the conspirators, with the reflection, "It must be by his death." The significance of this fact has been overlooked by the commentators. Under the spell of Shakspere's wizardry, the critics accept Brutus at his own and his co-conspirators' valuation, overlooking the very obvious facts that the arguments of Cassius in Act I were of such a puerile character that they could not have imposed upon any but the dullest intelligences and that he was in fact fanning Brutus's jealousy of Caesar's greatness and growing power. That Brutus was in fact consumed by envy and that he was not actuated by the lofty motives he pretends to, is subtly indicated by Shakspere in making him open his soliloquy with the reflection with which it should have ended. As it is, Brutus begins with the determination to assassinate his friend and then proceeds to justify his secret desire. A foregone conclusion based on affective causes of a personal nature is rationalized into a semblance of a logical consideration of the country's welfare. The only conflict in Brutus's mind is how to do a villanous act without thinking himself a villain thereafter.

## VII

The failure on the part of critics and actors to realize the psychological significance of losing and forgetting things has resulted not only in a complete misunderstanding of a very significant and important incident in "Othello" (Act III., Scene 3) but in a misinterpretation of at least one line of the text, in the loss of an opportunity for some very fine acting, besides making Shakspere guilty of a piece of such crude amateurishness as is utterly inconceivable even in a third-rate artist. According to all these interpreters of Shakspere the infuriated Othello orders his wife not to pick up the precious handkerchief when she solicitously stoops to do so after he or she had accidentally dropped it on finding that it was too small to go around his aching head. That this would have been a very clumsy piece of business; that under the circumstances, Desdemona, grieved and shocked, would not have thought of stooping for the handkerchief; that if she had done so and had been estopped by her husband from picking it up, either he or she or both must have subsequently remembered the incident and the magic handkerchief could not then have played the important rôle assigned to it, does not seem to have occurred to the critics, **or, if it has, they have justified** the poet by attributing to him an intention to show that " a reasonless chance prevailed in the world" (Brooke) or that "accident" played a tragic rôle in the lives of this ill-starred couple (Bradley).

A careful consideration of the scene in question (**cf. Studies in Philology,** April, 1918) leaves no room for doubt that in Shakspere's mind the painful scene between the jealous husband and his gentle, unsuspecting wife transpired as follows. Othello, having been aroused to a frenzy by Iago, sits brooding on the horrible thought of being a cuckold, when Desdemona enters to see why he is keeping his invited guests waiting. Half-heartedly and without rising from his seat or looking at her, staring fixedly before him and holding his throbbing temples in both hands, he murmurs: "I am to blame." This is so different from his usual gentlemanly and affectionate conduct that she inquires whether he is "well" and is told that he has "a pain upon [his] forehead, here." She, too simple-minded to catch the significance of Othello's use of the words

"upon" and "here," offers to bind his head with her handkerchief, (the talismanic token he had given her). She proceeds to do so. Just as soon as he perceives the touch of her hand against the forehead from which the imaginary horn of cuckoldom is growing he angrily withdraws his head, rises and throws the kerchief away from him without, of course, even looking at it. Like a child who can't believe that such a show of violent temper was seriously meant and for it, she almost instinctively puts out her hand to press it against his aching forehead. Her persistence angers him and he snaps out the words, "Let it alone!" [i. e., "Do not touch me!"]

Her forgetting of the manner of the loss of the handkerchief is easily comprehensible to one acquainted with the mechanism of "repression." We need hardly say that with his rejection of her offered kindness it must have dawned upon her, even if only unconsciously, that she had forever lost the love of the Moor to whose honors and valiant parts she had, in spite of nature and years, consecrated her soul and her fortunes, and that she then had no thought for that mummy-dyed handkerchief. In subsequently blotting this incident, his first act of cruelty, out of her mind she also blotted out the memory of the handkerchief. The lapse of memory was not accidental, but psychically determined.

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# Psychanalysis and Recent Fiction

**By Floyd Dell, New York**

The literary discovery and exploitation of the Unconscious was approximately coincident with the development of the scientific study and treatment of psychic aberration by the precursors of psychanalysis. The first ambitious attempt to apply the theories of psychic aberration to literature was a most unhappy one; but Max Nordau's crude and sensational and rather silly book, "Degeneration," published in 1893, serves at least to mark a date when public attention was focussed upon the fact that something new and disturbing had begun to manifest itself in literature. That something new, we are now in a position to say without any of Nordau's violent and far-fetched implications, was the emergence to an unprecedented degree of the "raw" fantasy-creations of the Unconscious, undisguised, or at least disguised to a slighter extent than had hitherto in literary history been the case. This period, though lying outside the formal scope of this present commentary, must be remarked upon somewhat at length, as it is the background to the present-day literary tendencies which we are about to consider.

The question why, toward the end of the XIX century, a literature so crowded with "raw" and fairly unassimilable fantasy-creations of the Unconscious should so suddenly burst upon an astonished and bewildered public, requires at least a tentative answer. The causes were many and individual, and we should have to look to the personal history of the various writers for a scientifically satisfactory statement of them. Nevertheless the fact that these causes operated in such a multitude of individuals, and at the same time, implies, in addition to the influences

of emulation and imitation, some large predisposing cause in the social psychology of the period. And doubtless that cause is to be found in the social position and function of the writer, or indeed of the artist, literary or other, in that period.

If we compare the position and function of the literary artist in the nineteenth century with that of the "skald," the bard, the minstrel, the ballad-singer, the popular dramatist, the court-poet, or even the court fool and jester of other times, we note a tremendous difference in social position and function. The position of the artist has seldom been an enviable one from the point of view of power and riches. But, though the poet and story-teller might be held in a sort of contempt as a weakling, he was yet not without his peculiar honor. Thersites might be banged over the head by the royal scepter of Odysseus for his impudence in attempting to meddle in the affairs of his betters, but nevertheless Thersites was as much a part of heroic Greek life as Odysseus himself. He was by no means without influence; indeed, it was precisely because his inflammatory eloquence, as Homer tells us, came near to causing a general mutiny and putting an end to the siege of Troy, that he had to be disciplined by Odysseus. What we have to note is that Thersites had his opinions, and was listened to with respect when he uttered them; and this was true because he regarded himself, and was regarded by his fellows, as having as much of a "stake" in the Trojan adventure as any warrior among them. He was a citizen as well as a public entertainer. In Elizabethan times the relation of the poet to the social order had become more tenuous, and his existence was correspondingly more precarious. He had begun to depend to some extent upon money-payments for specific services rendered to individuals, such as publishers and theatrical managers; and this was seldom sufficient for a livelihood. Nevertheless, he was still felt to be a necessary part of the social order, and the discrepancy in the economic arrangements which left him without any certain means of support was patched up by the custom of voluntary patronage dispensed by rich and influential lords. This was not conceived to be charity, any more than the "collection" in a modern Protestant church is conceived to be charity. The poet was an institution which had to be supported; he was a part of the life of his time; he was its singer, its dramatist, he made its dreams come true in his songs or on the boards of the theater. The poet was as much a factor in such a regime as the newspaper is in the regime of modern capitalism.

And, having such an essential relationship to his social order, finding an identity between his own dreams and those of his contemporaries, the forms in which he expressed these dreams were inevitably such as could be readily and widely understood. He had every incentive to prune, adapt, clarify and, in a word, sublimate the fantasy-products of his Unconscious into popularly assimilable tales and poems. Did he refuse to do so, he would lose his social function; the desire for praise, however, would be sufficient to overcome the wilful and infantile desire to put forth these fantasies in their original private state. We can suppose that such artists would continue to adapt their fantasies to the social demand so long as that remained psychically possible.

But with the advent of modern commercialism, a new state of affairs

is created for the artist. Modern commercialism is repugnant to most of the demands of the Unconscious; and commercialism cannot readily, as could the Heroic Age, or the Middle Ages, find singers to celebrate it. On the other hand, it finds them eager to damn it. In this predicament, in its anxiety to hear justification of its works, it turns from poets to philosophers, precisely as it turned from Catholicism, which hampered its growth, to a more friendly, more deterministic, less poetic, Protestantism. It finds in the determinism of various schools of metaphysicians, in the new science of Manchesterian political economy, and finally in the philosophical implications of the theory of evolution, an apologia for its rule of greed. And with this change, this withdrawal of emphatic approval from the realm of fantasy-production, the arts begin to decay, in direct proportion to the spread of modern commercialism. England, a land of lutes and "catches," forgets how to sing; only in the lands where medievalism still resists the progress of capitalism are poetry and music still at home. England's poets flee her shores for the more congenial atmosphere of Italy. Some of them, like William Morris, take up the intellectual struggle against capitalism. All of them, without exception, turn to the past, and celebrate its lost freedom and happiness, even its lost disorder, with fond regret. The Victorian era in English poetry is stamped with this effort to escape from modern commercialism by turning to the Middle Ages. And this desire to escape is for a while a popular sentiment, and its expression in good round terms is generally applauded. Tennyson becomes poet-laureate because he asserts that "the heir of all the ages," with his damnable coal-mines and railways and factories, is perhaps no better off than a naked savage, and that we certainly lead lives less interesting than they did back in the times of good King Arthur. The poet in revolt against the dominant tendencies of his age has still a social function in expressing that revolt.

But modern commercialism develops inexorably, and the poet is more and more cast into disfavor. Commercial society cannot tolerate the poison of discontent that is being stuffed into the heads of young people by the poet. He is told to stop maundering about the past—to look about him, and celebrate the glories of machinery. Sometimes a poet does so, or appears to do so, as in the case of Kipling; though upon closer examination this singer of machinery is found to be celebrating rather the joys of vagabondage in remote parts of the earth. . . . But the emphasis has changed; poets are not wanted by commercialism, unless they will, as it were, punch the time-clock, and adapt themselves to the speeding-up system. They can, by an effort of the will, do some things that capitalism wants done: they can use their skill and cleverness to glorify business and represent the business-man to himself as a hero. But the truth is, it goes against the grain. To the extent that they glorify the processes and triumphs of our industrial system, they have the sense of having sold their souls to the devil. It was not uncongenial to them to glorify the heroes of the past, for such heroisms were fairly identical with their own dreams; but they cannot take pleasure in dreaming the dreams of modern industrial enterprise. And for what they can readily and joyfully dream, capitalism has not the slightest use. Or rather, their cheapest and tawdriest dreams of escape do serve the purpose of lulling the discontent of the victims of modern industrial enterprise; but they must dream within a restricted area, as it were in

chains. If they forget themselves for a moment they are likely to overstep the bounds of the permissible. Thus the execution of these popular fantasies of "love-youtth-and-success" becomes a task more and more mechanical and wearisome. In taking up the trade of ministering to the needs of modern commercialism, the writer must learn to cease to dream. He has good reason for saying to himself that he has sold his soul. He has indeed put his Unconscious in pawn for bread.

In a word, the literary artist has lost his social function. The struggle has been too difficult, the burden of adaptation too intolerably heavy. If he seeks to retain his functional relation to the age, he is withheld permission to dream; if he seeks to retain his freedom to dream, he loses touch with his contemporaries. Now art is not free dreaming, but a compromise effected between the individual need of fantasy-production and the social gratification of finding these fantasy-productions understood and shared by others. When the artist loses his popular audience he loses at the same time one of the factors of artistic creativity. He has not utterly ceased to have an audience, to be sure, he does not create for himself alone; he has at least a few of his fellow-artists as an audience. With them, since they share his own impulses, he need not trouble to adapt, disguise or clarify his fantasies to the extent necessary to make them assimilable for popular consumption. These fantasies, then, if not quite untrammeled, if still rigorously controlled by obscure technical principles which he and his fellow artists at least can understand, may yet be released from the control which has existed when these fantasies had a broad social function. And when we realize that the withdrawal of social approval from such dreaming under the regime of commercialism means a lack of opportunity to sublimate the artistic impulses, and amounts to a violent repression of them, we can understand that when they finally do burst forth, they are inevitably in a comparatively "raw" state. That is, they are obviously infantile, full of the unsublimated "polymorph-perverse" tendencies of infancy.

It is precisely these tendencies, felt rather than understood, which lead to the rediscovery of the artist by the public. The public is shocked, when not merely amused or bewildered; and that part of it which is engaged in a personal repression of these particular tendencies sets up a hue and cry against the abominable wickedness of art and artists. The divorce between the artist and the public is thereby made more complete. The artist sometimes formally renounces his connection with society, and makes it his proud boast that his work is devoid of any social significance whatsoever. A small section of the public, meanwhile, whose own minority revolt against the spirit of the time is expressed in this art, seeks to make up for the hysterical persecution of the artist by an almost equally hysterical adulation, and the artist is thus still more isolated from the world in which he lives.

This, then, is the background to the literature of our own time. It remains, however, to say that directly upon the heels of the literary period just described, there came a change in social psychology which has once more partly restored to the artist his lost social function. So long as the spirit of the age was that of triumphant capitalism, the artist could have no social function, and his fantasies must be repressed or breed rankly in solitude; but as capitalism began to involve itself in

economic predicaments which led down to disaster, and as the spirit of the age became more tolerant of criticism, the artists, sensitive to this change, began to speak out once more. It had now become possible to conceive of a future in which the creative instincts could flower under friendly skies. So it was that they began to turn hopefully to the future instead of, as in the Victorian period, regretfully to the past. The novel, as a critical study of the disintegration of commercial society, became once once more a significant art-form, occupying this leading role because it, rather than poetry, is best adapted to function in such a transition period. (In this circumstance we have also the reason why poetry, though it is once more beginning to be a part of popular life, is, despite some efforts to challenge the novel in the field of social criticism, for the most part marked by the infantile characteristics of the period of the 'Nineties. Its ability to dispute place with the novel depends upon the power of its users to effect a reconquest of the narrative or dramatic form.)

The approach of the great debacle in which commercial civilization overwhelmed itself in the world war did not fail to register itself upon the sensitive unconscious perceptions of artists. It was a disturbing influence, just as the Russian revolution and this suggestion of a new world-reconstruction has been a psychically regenerating and healing influence. The effect of these premonitions of apocalypse, these perceptions of social disintegration and change, upon the fiction of the time has been to release literary artists from the bondage of existing traditions, and set them experimenting, more or less effectively, in new modes, A vast amount of fantasy-products had been dug up and thrown out, as it were, by the artistic activities of the preceding period; and these lay about, so to speak, helter-skelter, unclassified, unstudied, not-understood. The spirit of this later period was one characterized by a gallant though necessarily unscientific attempt to understand these psychic phenomena and arrange them in significant form.

It is not the intention of this commentary to discuss in any detail or with any attempt at thoroughness the literature of this period. Only a few books will be specifically mentioned. One of these, a book which more than any other represents this attempt, unhelped apparently by Freudian theory, to display some coherent design in the chaos of psychic life, is D. H. Lawrence's "Sons and Lovers." As its title suggests, it reveals the effect of early maternal influences upon the later love-life of its male characters. It is an extraordinary book, in its masterly narrative explication of obscure psychic phenomena. It will remain a classic of which might loosely be called, what in fact is frequently called, "psychanalytic fiction." It returns a magnificently affirmative reply to the question, here to be considered from the literary rather than the student's standpoint, whether the phenomena of unconscious psychic life can be adequately and effectively dealt with in fiction.

But this affirmative reply must be qualified by a consideration of the same author's later novel, "The Rainbow." Here the attempt of the conscious mind to grapple with the secrets of the unconscious life has, from a conservative literary point of view, failed—apparently through setting itself too immense a task; and the Unconscious itself, breaking free from the conscious interpretation, speaks to us in dream-language,

in vivid and dramatic but fluid symbols which, though they may be significant enough to the student, can only bewilder and astound even the sympathetic reader who is possessed of no technical key to the cypher. The author has apparently yielded to this insurgence of unconscious impulses in the belief or the hope that he was thereby pioneering in the development of the novel. Such indeed may be the case, but it seems improbable that fiction can follow so obscure and dizzy a path; and it is notable that this author has chosen verse for his further literary experiments in this field, giving up entirely the task so heroically but inadequately attempted in "The Rainbow," of giving a solid and familiar narrative sequence to the lyrical revelations of the secrets of the Unconscious.

The same kind of literary experience is implicit in the most notable American contributions to this kind of literature, the works of Sherwood Anderson. The first of these, "Windy Macpherson's Son," was a novel traditional in form and rich in psychic content; it was followed by a book of short stories, "Winesburg, Ohio," in which there is apparent a lessening of conscious control and a more and more indulgent use of unconstrained fantasy; and now this writer has also turned to poetry of an uncompromisingly infantile and symbolic sort. The tendency then, in the literary exploitation of the Unconscious, is for the writer to forsake the role of analyst for that of patient; this tendency may be fortunate for the student who wishes to analyze these materials, but it is, from a conservative literary point of view, a misfortune. From this point of view, the future of "psychanalytic fiction" does not lie in the mere expression, but in the arrangement and explanation of the unconscious impulses.

We may turn for an example of the writer who exercises such conscious control over his materials, and who has not been swamped by them, to J. D. Beresford; though he has perhaps avoided this catastrophe by yielding, at intervals, to these impulses, in fiction of a markedly unconstrained sort. In his chief works, however, he is eminently the master of his materials, he studies his data in the most careful way and arranges them in the most deliberate manner. "The History of Jacob Stahl," a trilogy, has gained rank as one of the most significant English novels of our time. It is an admriably realistic work, and its use—apparently informed by a study of psychanalytic theory—of unconscious phenomena is rather slight, and never obtrusive, but pervasive; and it is his understanding of the motivation of human actions by unconscious impulses which gives to this story its peculiar impressiveness and strength. It is simply the story of a man lacking in self-confidence and ill-adjusted to his environment, who makes a failure of his life and then rebuilds his character and career upon new and successful lines. If there is any moral to be drawn for fiction, from this example of the use of psychanalytic knowledge, it is that a very little, discreetly used, will go a long way.

Nevertheless, this author has ventured further. His "God's Counterpoint" is the story of a male prude whose marital happiness is wrecked by his aversion from sex; the sources of this neurosis are only slightly hinted at, and but a casual reference is made to his dreams; it is in his denouement that he has attempted a bold though disguised use of Freud-

ian theory. The story is to include a psychanalytic cure of the hero's neurosis, and a reconciliation with his wife upon normal sexual terms. The author has perhaps wisely avoided introducing the psychanalytic treatment literally, but he has thereby been put to the necessity of inventing some probable incident which would contain the same elements, namely, transference, the bringing of the contents of the Unconscious up into consciousness, and counter-transference: and he has done this startlingly and dramatically enough through the medium of a love-affair with another woman. The validity of the incident must be left to the individual judgment of its readers; but it perhaps fails of its due literary effect through too much dramatic foreshortening; the literary tradition does not predispose even a sympathetic reader to appreciate the tragic aspects of sexual inhibitions in a male, and such a reader will be unprepared to take at its actual psychic value the incident which results in his cure. Traditionally, moreover, this means of cure seems too emotionally complicated to effect such a quick and thorough reconciliation with a wife. The incident seems to have a symbolic rather than a realistic truth, but this symbolic truth at least transpires impressively through its medium. But from a literary point of view, the book does not serve as an example of the best way to handle such "psychanalytic" material.

An American novel, "Peter Middleton," by Henry K. Marks, tells a somewhat similar story, but does not concern itself with the problem of presenting a cure. Here the hero is incapacitated by a mother-complex of devastating proportions, not only from a normal sexual life but from almost any kind of normal life, and in the end commits suicide. It is an artistic and impressive study into which no technical jargon (for, from the literary point of view, any unfamiliar scientific terminology is, in a novel, an objectionable form of jargon) allowed to intrude. (The author, who is a physician, would perhaps object to this diagnosis of his hero, as in his opinion, expressed to the present writer, cases which are apparently explicable in psychanalytic terms may actually be the result of derangements in the activities of the glandular system, and hence, by any means so far known, incurable).*

We have thus far noted the efforts of writers to explain the phenomena of the psychic life without help from psychanalytic theory, and other efforts to use this theory in such tasks, and we have noted a tendency to become swamped, either by the immense amounts of new material for the first time included within the scope of fiction, or by the immense knowledge which psychanalysis puts at the writer's disposal. We observe that there is an embarrassment of riches, and that the new realms thus added to fiction have special difficulties in connection with their conquest. We shall now consider one of these special difficulties, which constitutes no small objection to any direct use of psychanalytic knowledge in fiction.

Psychanalysis tells us what is wrong with people who are psychically sick, no doubt. But books about people who are psychically sick

*Both Dr. Marks and our critic seem to have overlooked the fact that in such cases as Peter Middleton's the deranged function of the glandular system may be psychically determined.—Ed.

are not the kind of books that people want to read. Even if the story ends in a successful "cure", still nobody wants to identify himself with an invalid. The principle of identification is one thoroughly understood, or at least consistently acted upon, by writers. How can the magnificent ideas of Freud be made use of by enterprising writers of fiction when they are debarred from writing about invalids?

It is true, people who are psychically sick have frequently been used as the heroes and heroines of novels and plays; but they were not so denominated and explained. If the fascinatingly vicious characters in fiction with which innocent readers like to identify themselves were frankly set down as neurotics, the pleasure of reading about them would be largely gone. The hero of Somerset Maugham's "The Moon and Sixpense," for instance, would be far less interesting to a multitude of readers who take delight in his brutality and ruthlessness, if they were not permitted to imagine him a "strong" character instead of a weak one. Doubtless, in this instance, the novelist is under much the same illusion as his readers; but if he knew, would he, knowing also the tastes of the public, have the heart to write about him? Yes, if he is fairly indifferent to popularity; and this at once seems to restrict, and perhaps fortunately, the use of psychanalytic material to those most capable of doing justice to it.

But this restriction does not in fact, obtain; there is an ingenious way of getting around the difficulty, and it has already been discovered and put in use, in a collection of short stories, "From the Life," by an American journalist, Harvey O'Higgins. He has in fact found a means of making the psychanalytic formula jibe with the magazine formula of "youth-love-and-success!" He does this by concentrating attention upon the "cure." Averyone likes to know how great men succeeded. There was a time when the great man was not great, when he was an ordinary person, just like any of us. What was the turning point in his career? Mr. O'Higgins makes this turning-point hinge upon psychic factors of the sort revealed in psychanalysis, rather than upon circumstances or what is commonly called "character." Thus he gives us a picture of a great magnate at a critical moment in his youth. He has been, up to that moment, a shy and awkward youth, very much domineered over by his sisters and afraid to say Boo to a goose. In the atmosphere of his home he is utterly a child. But straying by accident into another environment, he finds himself accepted as a man—an important personage. He develops this new personality under the favorable influences of his new environment as much as possible, but at home relapses into his infantile character. Finally a moment arrives when this dual character can no longer be maintained, because the two environments suddenly impinge upon each other. He is expected on the one hand to be a child, on the other to be a man. He must choose. He must either give up being a man altogether or assert himself and cease to be a child at all. If he admits the claims of the old environment, he will lose his glory in the eyes of the sweetheart that he has found in the new. So he must impose his mastership upon his sisters, his mother, his father. A terrific moment! Love—and, though he does not know it, his whole future— is risked upon his action in that moment. He asserts his manhood, his bewildered family surrender to his mastery after

a short but terrible struggle, and thenceforth the road is open for him to fame and fortune; for the girl believes that he is a Great Man, and he must act up to her belief.

Other stories in this volume are more "psychanalytic" and also more fantastic than this, notably the one in which an unpopular writer achieves immense success by writing to please a girl waif who has been degraded to the point where reality is intolerable to her. This girl, who has been "treated like a dog," is so far gone when he picks her up that she imagines herself a dog. The hero cures the sexual frigidity which has resulted from the cruel treatment she has received from men, by compelling the original author of her misfortunes to "get down on the floor like a dog" and lick her shoes. Here we have a dashing journalistic use of material cleverly excavated from the Freudian treasure-cave; and whatever may be thought of the particular way in which these materials are here furbished up for magazine use, the conclusion is inescapable that this kind of treasure-hunting is going to spread among fiction writers. How else, save by the aid of a little Freudian psychology, could such an incident as the licking of the heroine's shoes be made credible to readers however enamored of the sensational in fiction!

It seems that our periodical literature is going to be brightened up with sensational incident under the Freudian aegis, and that through the medium of a kind of "psychanalytic" detective story, we are to be made familiar with various psychanalytic concepts and phrases. Thus Mr. O'Higgins in another tale in the same volume: "I consider the incident illuminating because it really explains why Wickson became a reformer. Undoubtedly he transferred to the governing power of society the feeling that he had against his father, the governing power of his youth. He did it, of course, unconsciously, sympathizing with the victims of social injustice as he had sympathized with his mother and himself. And that, I believe, is the reason why he 'never thought' of his father again. Moreover, it was probably his early revolt against paternal injustice that inspired him with the ambition to be a lawyer so that he might be able to defend himself and others against wrongs, and help to administer justice equitably. I advance the theory because I have found a similar transference in many other reformers." And of the censorship activities of a local Anthony Comstock one of the characters, an artist, says: "Harris did it because he was rotten himself—that's my idea, anyway—and his inward struggle with himself made him a crazy fanatic. He could see something nasty in any—in any naked innocence," etc.

All this is very well, pleasant enough, in its way, and no doubt useful; but it is scarcely the conclusion to which we might have hoped to arrive. Some of us at least who are concerned about the future of fiction, have hoped for nothing less than a regeneration of this art by the impact upon it of the science of the Unconscious. Is there any reason to cherish any such high hopes? I believe there is.

Let us sum up: we have found that the attempt to deal with the Unconscious in fiction has been, with but few exceptions, an unsucces-

ful struggle for artistic mastery over difficult material. Of such material, the parental complexes are obviously the most easily mastered. But we have only to suggest the anal-erotic complexes to touch upon material which is scarcely to be mastered artistically except by sheer tours de force.* Within the boundaries of what is possible, we have, when once the chaos of unconscious impulses are reduced to order, only a few significant themes, which cannot very profitably be handled over and over again. We have already had a few too many books dealing with the mother-complex. . . . But it must be borne in mind that all these works of fiction are representative of the first stages of acquaintance with the phenomena of the Unconscious. They are experiments in dealing with a kind of knowledge which has not yet been artistically assimilated and made a part of a general body of knowledge. This fact should lead us to doubt that the fiction of the future will be patterned upon the models of present-day "psychanalytic" fiction. Our story tellers will be less excited about this knowledge when they have become better acquainted with it, and they will make, doubtless, a different use of it than they are at present inclined to do.

It seems probable that within a few years a knowledge of the Unconscious will be as inevitable a part of the writer's training as the study of anatomy is part of the training of a painter; and this knowledge will be used with a similar discreetness and pervasiveness. It is the knowledge of the muscles and bones which enables a painter to convey to us the truth of the surfaces of the body; and it will be just such an intimate knowledge of unconscious impulses which will enable a writer to convey to us the truth of human behavior. But we will not necessarily have lessons in psychological anatomy thrust upon us. In a word, it is likely that stories will retain their traditional form and much of their traditional content, and that they will merely be more profundly true than they have ever been except when they were the products of exceptional genius. In a sense they may be the same stories to which we have been listening since the world began, but told with a deeper truth.

The revolutionary effect of the new knowledge of the Unconscious upon fiction will perhaps lie in the vital assistance which it can give to the artist in the performance of his social function. We have seen that with the decay of our industrial system the chasm which modern commercialism created between the artist and his age has commenced to disappear. The artist is once more beginning to fulfil his social function, and that social function appears now very clearly to consist in elucidating and justifying the discontent of the common man with a state of society in which his best instincts are stifled, in searching out and emphasizing the significance and the promise of all those instincts, in expressing for him aspirations which have been too long repressed for a free and more adventurous and more beautiful and more creative life. Once the artist speaks for his neighbor as well as for himself, he ceases to be the infantile anarch, and becomes a constructive force of the first importance. Nor need we be troubled here by the old logo-

*Such as, perhaps, the "Ulysses" of James Joyce; though it is not easy (and, speaking for myself, impossible) to see the artistic design in this anal-erotic fantasia.

machy of "the creative vs. the critical mind." No one can criticise the old without creating an image of the new; nor can anyone create an image of the new without thereby criticising the old. It is the function of the artist to criticise all that exists and help bring into being all that does not yet exist save in the wistful and rebellious realm of the Unconsciocs. It is his function to bring these obscure dreams to light from the darkness in which they have been repressed. The artist is the psychanalyst of human society. And in his task of liberating the very impulses which society so much fears from their age-old repressions, he will have not only his own unconscious wishes to guide him, but a secure and serene knowledge that these impulses, however strange and fearful they may be in the darkness, will flower into beauty in the light of day.

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# In Memoriam

OTTO GROSS died in February of the current year at Berlin. With him died a rich promise for sychanalysis—a promise that could not fulfil itself, however, even in life. The son of Hanns Gross, the well-known professor of criminal law at Graz, he devoted himself to neurology and at an early age was appointed **Docent** in neurology at the University of Graz. He then became interested in psychanalysis and published several very significant works. His book **Ueber psychopathische Minderwertigkeiten** [Concerning Psychopathic Inferiorities], Vienna, 1909, and his study "**Ueber das ideogene Moment bei manisch-depressiven Irresein** [Concerning the Ideogenetic Factor in Manic-depressive Insanity], both reveal a fertile mind, a quality akin to genius. Unfortunately this brilliant intellect contracted a tragic bondage to opium. The relations between father and son soon became strained, their quarrels were aired in all the German newspapers, and finally, after having indulged in all sorts of eccentricities, Otto was confined to a sanatorium as a sufferer from what was regarded as "dementia precox." After some time had passed, he asked to be sent to me for treatment. His father consented. He was released and entrusted to my care. It was soon apparent that an incorrect diagnosis had been made and that he really suffered from a severe neurosis complicated with indulgence in opium and cocaine. His health improved rapidly; he was able to resume his work. Then the war came and parted us. Gross took up his post in a hospital for epidemic diseases and labored with superhuman energy in his struggle with disease. A number of minor works testify to the renaissance of his powers. The last of these (see my notice, page 57) was his swan-song. I know nothing of the circumstances attending his death. I know only that I am acquainted with no one who more terribly laid waste his powers, no one who might have done greater things. What was thought to be weakness of character in his make-up was neurosis. His mind resisted every deeper insight into itself and the opium served to narcotize this self-knowledge. His was the tragedy of all neurotics who would analyse themselves. They arrive at an **impasse**, and no amount of learning takes them beyond. . . .

W. STEKEL. **(G. F. S.)**

# Reviews

**Berguer, Georges. Quelques traits de la Vie de Jésus, au point de vue psychologique et psychanalytique. 8° pp. 375. Genève et Paris. (Atar.) Fr. 15.**

M. Georges Berguer, following Strauss, Renan and a multitude of writers less well known to the general public, in his turn, has just given us an outline of the Life of Jesus. This is a task both delicate and daring. What, seemingly, could anyone hope to glean in a field that has already been so thoroughly gone over! Nevertheless, the work which has just appeared proves itself to be of first importance, showing us that the attempt was far from vain: the best of the harvest was yet to be gathered. The commentators and chroniclers to date have done little more than to sift the chaff of historic facts; and, though this sifting was done with most meticulous care, the meshes of their sieves were too coarse and thus permitted the good grain of psychologic truths to be lost—the grain which forms the substance of the sublime epic of Him whom we call the Savior of the world. It was this grain which M. Berguer had made it his pious duty to gather. To the souls hungering for the truth, this will prove far more satisfying than the huge masses, imposing but neither to be swallowed nor digested, which were so proudly gathered together by M. Berguer's predecessors.

This new Life of Jesus marks a radical departure from all conceptions that had been held up to the present. Instead of trying to reestablish by a discussion and comparison of the texts the superficial details of the career of the great Nazarene, instead of trying to determine whether a certain fact related in one of the Gospels fits in with the chronological possibilities, or with separate historical facts from the legend, M. Berguer has set himself a task profound in quite a different sense and of an eminently more practical bearing: why is it, he wonders, that only Christianity, although prompted by the same principles of conduct as the religions that preceded it, has succeeded in realizing the "ascent from earth to heaven" which, by common agreement, characterizes it and by means of which it has brought about the most momentous revolution that has ever taken place upon this earth? whereas the Greek and Oriental mythologies have seen their aspirations fade into the thin air, like a dream or dissolving view, and result in practically nothing?

We grasp instantly the interest of a problem of this kind; or rather, this problem gets us in its grasp. And how much more so than in the case of a controversy of a historical or exegetical nature! To solve this problem, it is absolutely necessary that we try to sound the depths of that extraordinary personality in whom, according to Renan, "there is concentrated everything that is good and exalted in our nature," that religious genius who towers so high above all others that, in Flournoy's words, he constitutes "a psychological phenomenon hitherto unique."

It is to this delicate task that M. Berguer has devoted himself with a courage and an assurance worthy of the highest praise. To throw light upon the personality of Christ, to understand the society and circumstances in which He lived, and the impression He made on those

about Him, to comprehend the origin and the development in Him of His Messianic vocation, to explain the victory that He had won over the subjective and the objective obstacles that were constantly hindering the accomplishment of His sublime mission—to do all this M. Berguer has recourse to the light furnished by psychology, the light which was used to such advantage by William James, by Flournoy, and P. Bovet.

Indeed, for some years now a new psychology, psychanalysis, concerning itself with the unconscious mental processes, with all the subterranean currents that, unknown to us, influence our volitional and intellectual life, has been able to demonstrate the great rôle played by these phenomena in the genesis and development of popular beliefs, myths and religions. Psychanalysis has discovered, among other things, that the most violent of these streams flowing beneath the level of consciousness have their source in the most distant periods of our childhood, and that the direction they have at that time taken influences in a large measure the orientation of our adult life; the psychological attitudes that we assume in those early years become, in some manner, type attitudes that we make use of later all of our lives, and with these we associate willingly many other attitudes; so that a given adult, under given circumstances, plays over again, without suspecting it, certain scenes of his childhood. The most fundamental of these attitudes is that pertaining to the love of one's own mother and the mingled feelings, more generally one of hatred, that one has for his own father. We thus have here what is called the family romance. This family romance, which is always latent in every one's soul, as also in the soul of the mob of all times, gives us the clue to the origin of certain legends. M. Berguer takes advantage of this romance so as to explain several features of the legend of the miraculous birth of Christ, the principal one of which being the absence of participation by the father and the substitution in his stead of the Holy Ghost.

But it is especially in the development of the Christian life that the influence of the family romance can be established. This conception takes into consideration the fundamental tendency to regard the Divinity as being paternal—the Father in Heaven—and to have for the Divinity filial feelings as well as certain fears, thus betraying the infantile origin of this attitude. The problem here consists in showing how to the feeling of fear aroused by the God of the Old Testament there have been added, or, if you will, there have been substituted feelings of love, and how this transformation, this "sublimation," of the idea of paternity has been affected in the soul of Christ. This central question our author takes up in his fine chapter on "The Personality of Jesus."

We cannot here set forth the interesting interpretations of the temptations of Christ, of the miracles, and of the transfiguration and of the resurrection, that M. Berguer offers. They cannot here be discussed in detail, since the author himself proposes them only with reservations, and as being subject to further verification; nevertheless, the fact remains that the method employed in this work deserves the attention and to be welcomed by all Christians as being full of promise. Doubtless this new Life of Jesus will dumbfound those persons who are without previous knowledge of this method, by the newness of the

path that is being followed, by the feeling of queerness aroused at first by the process of psychanalysis and by the relationship that it establishes as existing between certain exalted tendencies of our moral being and those others that are rooted deep in the most animal regions of our poor body.

Thus we feel no surprise on learning that, on the appearance of this work, the theologians frowned and the Consistory made a wry face. Let us refrain from criticising these entirely natural reactions. When one considers the narrowmindedness with which neurologists received the first results of psychanalysis, though the results were deserving of their immediate attention, one is hardly to be amazed at finding theologians exhibiting a similar distaste. One may be a theologian without being more than human. All that is in the order of things. It is a law taught us by the history of ideas that one or two generations must pass before a truth is recognized as such by those who would have profited most by the recognition of that truth.

My own opinion is that this new way of looking upon the phenomena of Christianity has all the future in its favor. For, even from the point of view of religious interests, psychanalysis is infinitely more promising of results than the historic-dogmatic method which, instead of trying to penetrate the very essence of the religious phenomena, concerns itself, so to speak, only with external reality. The psychological method, it is true, does not lay claim to being able to offer the solution of all the great problems of religion; it has, at any rate, the advantage of bringing to our attention the fact that a religion to be efficient implies, above all, an inner life, not a doctrine. Under the influence of the scholasticism of the Middle Ages logic, somewhat like the process of a growth of weeds, has gradually encroached upon all disciplines having life as their scope, to wit: psychology, pedagogy, religion; logic has stifled them with its artificial constructions, transforming gradually into vast cemeteries the fields destined for life's blooming. M. Berguer's book does its share of the required work of draining and clearing, inasmuch as it replaces the emphasis where it properly belongs: that is to say, on the fundamentals. In the place of a theology that is objective, static and too frequently merely verbal, M. Berguer's book endeavors to build up a theology that is subjective and dynamic, and that must be conceived in psychologic terms, in human terms, if it is to have any hold upon our souls. For the important thing for us to know, in so far as it may be possible, is how this dream that we live within our own inmost selves every day, kept alive and added to by our aspirations and by our sufferings, by our hopes and by our doubts—how this dream culminated in its ideal solution in the soul of Jesus Christ?

It is a definite characteristic of the work of M. Berguer that it tends to show that our religion consists essentially of a psychic attitude, a spiritual transformation, and not in the performance of external and material rites, which are frequently enough only an excuse for avoiding the inner effort which is the one that tries us. In view of this, what is important to establish in a Life of Christ is much less that a certain fact occurred at such a place and time, but rather the psychologic circumstances which served Christ in bringing to realization the sacrifice of oneself for the benefit of a better humanity. For it is

this sacrifice that each Christian must achieve anew for himself; and this act, because of its intimate nature, is absolutely apart from any considerations of time and place.

Far from weakening the bases of religious certainty, this change of orientation, if I mistake not, cannot but prove favorable to religion. Not only because when we make facts less strange we make them more acceptable, but also, and especially, because the placing of the entire emphasis of religious truth on the subjective act makes this truth incontestable and beyond the reach of scepticism. I can hardly understand how the partisans of the purely historical method fail to see that a fact, and an historic fact especially, is always at the mercy of a new discovery which will of necessity call it into question or change its significance. History is always subject to revision, and I am amazed that a multitude of Christians should venture their faith upon anything so unstable. Extra-human reality **we never have within our grasp**; we can never stand sponsor to it. That is what Kant had in mind when, to save science from the corroding influence of doubt, he established its foundations in the categories of our understanding, that is to say, within ourselves. Is not a similar service rendered the Christian religion by those who seek to found it in the human categories of life and action? ED. CLAPAREDE.

(*Translated by D. Rosenthal*)

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DR. ERNEST JONES (London): *The Theory of symbolism.* The British Journal of Psychology, ix. 2, Oct., 1918. (Reprinted in the "International Zeitschrift f. aertl. Psychoanalyse, v. 4.)

The author aims at "attaining a fuller understanding of the theoretical nature of symbolism" as well as at determining exactly what may be regarded as a symbol. His efforts in the latter regard are manifestly influenced and guided by the conclusion he wishes to reach with reference to the theoretical nature of symbols. If an investigator will twist his definitions around to suit him, he may readily enough reach the coveted theory. But the critic will at once realise that the definitions apply only to the material selected for the occasion. This is easily seen to be the case with Jones's survey of the theoretical nature of symbols, an essay which, notwithstanding its suggestiveness and thoughtfulness, illuminates only a particular and limited aspect of symbolism, such as will probably prove most serviceable to the psychanalyst. I shall attempt to follow the course of his argument.

After a consideration of what is more or less carelessly spoken of as "symbolic" (signs, emblems, metaphors, similes, etc.), Jones deduces a group of siv characteristic, even "if not absolutely essential," attributes of what is commonly spoken of as "symbols" and "symbolic."

1. "A symbol is a representative or substitute of some other idea, from which in the context it derives a secondary significance not inherent in itself. . . . Typically a more essential idea is symbolised by a less essetial. Thus all sorts of important things may be represented by a shred of material called a flag."

2. "It represents the primary element through having something in common with it. Thus it would be a stretch of language a mneumonic knot in a handkerchief a symbol of the idea that has to be remembered,

although some writers (Ferrero) do so. The association may be an internal or an external one. An association, however, which is superficial to the reason may often be of significance in feeling, especially in the unconscious."

3. "A symbol is characteristically sensorial and concrete, whereas the idea symbolised may be a relatively abstract and complex one." [In true symbolism, as Jones emphasizes, it is more general than abstract.] The symbol thus tends to be shorter and more condensed than the idea represented."

To illustrate this Jones cites the following: "bowing, for instance, is said to symbolise the ancient custom of prostration, and hence respect with absence of hostile intent." In this illustration Jones is guilty of a confusion. Prostration itself is as much a symbol as bowing, if we agree to consider the latter a symbol. Bowing is only an abbreviated form of the more complete symbol (prostration). But what is symbolised is not the prostration but the mental attitude. Such questionable examples of symbolism are unfortunately not infrequent in Jones's essay.

4. "Symbolic modes of thought are the more primitive, both ontogenetically and phylogenetically, and represent a reversion to some simpler and earlier stage of mental development. They are therefore commoner in conditions that favor such a reversion, for example in fatigue, drowsiness, bodily illness, neurosis and insanity, and, above all, in dreams, where conscious mental life is reduced almost to a minimum." In this connection Jones refers to an observation first made by me, to wit: a tired person usually prefers looking through an illustrated paper in which the ideas are presented so as to appeal to one of the senses, rather than reading: sensory perception is less of a strain than abstract thinking.

5. "In most uses of the word a symbol is a manifest expression for an idea that is more or less hidden, secret, or kept in reserve. Most especially of all, the person employing the symbol is not even conscious of what it actually represents."

6. "Symbols, particularly those strictly so-called, resemble wit in being made spontaneously, automatically, and, in the broad sense of the word, unconsciously."

The further analysis of what constitutes a "true symbol" is introduced with the assertion that "an important characteristic of true symbolism is that the interpretation of the symbol usually evokes a reaction of surprise, incredulity, and repugnance on the part of those unfamiliar with it." Our author has already said: "With a true symbol the individual has no notion of its meaning, and rejects often with repugnance, the interpretation." In these two sentences Jones prepares us for that arbitrary conception of the symbol which he wishes finally to reach in order that he may thus bring the whole subject of symbolism under the sovereignty of the repression theory. It is a very easy matter to do this if one starts out with the assumption that only that symbol is a genuine symbol in which the phenomena of repression predominate.

With this purpose in mind, Jones sets out to ascertain the more special attributes of "true symbolism" in addition to the six enumerated above. In doing this he hits upon what he calls "the most exact definition" of symbols that has yet been given, namely, that of Rank and

Sachs in their "Significance of Psychoanalysis for the Mental Sciences." Inasmuch as this definition is of value not only because it is so well considered and so well expressed but because it is the point of departure for Jones's further elaboration, we reproduce it here. "A final means of expression of repressed material, one which lends itself to very general use on account of its especial suitability for disguising the unconscious and adapting it (by compromise formations) to new contents of consciousness, is the symbol. By this term we understand a special kind of indirect representation which is distinguished by certain peculiarities from the simile, metaphor, allegory, allusion and other forms of pictorial presentation of thought material (after the manner of a rebus), to all of which it is related. The symbol represents an almost ideal union of all these means of expression: it is a substitutive, perceptual replacement expression for something hidden, with which it has evident characteristics in common or is coupled by internal associative connections. Its essence lies in its having two or more meanings, as indeed it originated itself in a kind of condensation, an amalgamation of individual characteristic elements. Its tendency from the conceptual to the perceptual indicates its nearness to primitive thought; by this relationship symbolisation essentially belongs to the unconscious, but in its function as a compromise, it in no way lacks conscious determining factors, which in varying degrees condition both the formation of symbols and the understanding for them." Rank and Sachs attempt to establish the additional attributes of the truly symbolic, in accordance with the points of view announced by Freud in his **Lectures**: "Representation of unconscious material, constant meaning, independece of individual conditioning factors, evolutionary basis, linguistic connections, phylogenetic parallels in myths, cults, religion, etc."

Jones analyses the above under six headings and discusses and elaborates them from the point of view of the goal that he is aiming at.

Regarding the genesis of symbols, Jones—like Freud—sees the basis of all symbolism in a primary identification. To identify various objects seems to be one of the fundamental and primary attributes of the mind. There are two hypotheses to explain this. "The one most usually accepted would refer the phenomenon under discussion, as well as most others of symbolism, to the structure of the undeveloped mind, for which reason it might be termed **the static hypothesis**; the main feature to which they call attention is the intellectual incapaciy for discrimination. The second, **the psycho-analytical hypothesis**, considers this factor important but inadequate, and postulates other, dynamic factors as well."

Jones is of the opinion that three factors are operative in the primitive mind's tendency to identify different objects. The first, he says, the least important one, is **mental incapacity**; the second has to do with **the pleasure-pain principle** (i. e., **to obtain pleasure and avoid pain**), and the third with **the reality principle** (i. e., to adapt onself to reality most easily and with the least effort).

Thereto Jones compares symbols to the compromise-formations or symptoms resulting from the repression of a strongly affective tendency, the neurotic substitution-products resulting from a fusion of the repressed and repressing tendencies. He adds: "That symbolism arises as the result of intrapsychical conflict between the repressing tendencies and the repressed is the view accepted by all psycho-analysts. It is

implicit, for instance, in Ferenczi's actual definition of symbols as 'such ideas as are invested in consciousness with a logically inexplicable and unfounded affect, and of which it may be analytically established that they owe this affective over-emphasis to **unconscious** identification with another idea, to which the surplus of affect really belongs. Not all similes, therefore, are symbols, but only those in which the one member of the equation is repressed into the unconscious.'" We see, then, that other psychanalysts have prepared the way for the distorted definition of symbolism which Jones is now traveling and which leads him to the following conclusion:

"All psycho-analytical experience goes to show that the primary ideas of life, the only ones that can be symbolised—those, namely, concerning the bodily self, the relation of the family, birth, love, and death—retain in the unconscious throughout life their original importance, and that from them is derived a very large part of the more secondary interests of the conscious mind. As energy flows **from** them, and never **to** them, and as they constitute the most repressed part of the mind, it becomes comprehensible that symbolism should take place in one direction only. [This relates to the question why two ideas may not be the reciprocal symbolic equivalents of each other, i. e., if A symbolises B, why B may not symbolise A.] **Only what is repressed is symbolised;** only what is repressed needs to be symbolised. This conclusion is **the touchstone of the psycho-analytical theory of symbolism."**

"The number of symbols met with in practice," says Jones, "is extraordinarily high, and can certainly be counted by thousands. In astonishing contrast with this stands the curious fact that **the number of ideas thus symbolised is very limited** indeed. All symbols represent ideas of the self and the immediate blood relatives, or of the phenomena of birth, love, and death,—in short, the most primitive ideas and interests imaginable." The actual number of ideas amounts "perhaps to about a hundred." "The self [in the realm of symbolism] comprises the whole body or any separate part of it, [but] not the mind [?!]. . . The field of sexual symbolism is an astoundingly rich and varied one, and the vast majority of all symbols belong to this category; there are probably more symbols of the male organ itself than all other symbols put together."

After all this it will surprise no one not to find in Jones's thesis on what he regards as "true symbolism" any trace of that form of symbolism which would otherwise be considered the most typical and representative, namely, the creation of visible images for lofty, abstract ideas, e. g., symbols of infinity, perfection, the universe, omnipotence, unity, duality, sovereignty, causality, nature, the animal, the spiritual, the growth of the soul, periodicity, the passion of love. . . . But no; love does occur in his scheme; for with it we approach the sexual and it may therefore be linked to what has preceded. Jones has a great deal to say about phallic symbols. But I ask myself whether it is permissible to look on phallic symbols as symbols of the penis. Phallic symbol and symbol of the phallus . . . are they one and the same? I hardly think so. I even ask myself whether it is proper always to designate the various undoubted images representing the sexual organs and functions as "symbols"; it almost seems to me preferable to call them **cryptographs** or something of the sort. The least

that can be said is that when a bodily organ or functions is "symbolised" the result can by no means be regarded as a typical instance of symbolism. Much more typically "symbolic" is the visualization of psychic or abstract ideas, no matter how much they may be enveloped in all sorts of circumstantial detail. This must be taken into consideration even in the sphere of the erotic. It is inexplicable how our author can say the psychic has no place among symbols and that the ego is only the body. The large and rich field of psychic and functional symbolism has escaped his observation!

Jones devotes two pages to Pulcinello (Punchinello of the marionette stage) whom he regards as a symbol of the phallus. We grant that there is something of the phallic about him and, bearing the above distinction in mind, will call him a phallic symbol, although it is still a matter to be investigated whether in this personification the conception of symbolism is typically exemplified. But it is by no means a symbol for the virile member but, because of the phallic attributes with which it is endowed, a very appropriate symbol for man's crude instincts; it is exactly what Nodier, quoted by Jones, says: "O Polichinelle simulacre animé de l'homme naturel abandonné à ses instincts. [O animated image of the natural man abandoned to his instincts!] Pulcinello is a phallic symbol for something for which the phallus itself may be said to be a symbol. The very variegated behavior of this stage-figure sufficiently testifies to its deep-rooted functional significance in the mind.

The few comments which we have added to our quotations from Jones, should suffice to show the nature of his one-sidedness. Our criticism is not intended to detract from the value of his investigation of the subject, nor to deny the truth of the psychic mechanisms and processes he describes; all that he says about the finer details of repression is more or less true; but he has erred in his one-sided emphasis, an error which has seriously distorted the whole subject of symbolism. It is especially to be regretted that our author has wholly missed the intellectual and the ethical aspects of symbolism which make it of such great interest in the history of philosophy.

HERBERT SILBERER.
(Trans. by S. A. T.-

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**GROSS ,OTTO: Drei Aufsätze über den inneren Konflikt.** [Three Essays on Inner Conflict.] Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der sexualforschung, Vol. 2, Part 3. Bonn, 1919. (A. Markus & Weber).

This highly talented physician, to whom we owe two of the most stimulating works in psychanalytic literature, and to whom we once looked for great things, has long—all too long—remained silent. But now he appears again in the forum of science with three carefully studied essays. The first of these especially, "Conflict and Relation" (**Konflict und Beziehung**), affords the reader an abundance of food for thought. Gross holds the view that the homosexual component present in all of us has a weighty function to perform: it makes "empathy" (**Einfuehlung**) with the other sex possible, thus furnishing a foundation for love. Gross has always chosen the path of compromise. He has managed to reconcile apparently contradictory views and phenomena.

His discussions demonstrate that Freud, Adler, and Stekel are mutually complementary. According to Gross, sexuality in its original form is the need for contact with others, in both a physical and a psychic sense. Every perversion is the transference of sexual energy to an object originally non-sexual. But along with sexuality the will-to-power plays a great role. He synthesizes his views as follows:

The need for contact (primary sexuality) and the impulse to preserve the personality, which are the great basic "drives," give rise, under the pressure exerted by the environment, under the compulsion to conform (the condition for contact), and under the fear of isolation, to two antagonistic tendencies:

a) the tendency to break through isolation at the cost of self-subjection—Masochism;

b) the tendency to preserve the personality at the cost of an active maintenance of isolation (in the sexual sphere by dominating the love-object)—Sadism.

In this wise the masochistic-sadistic complex comes into being as the dominant expression of the inner conflict. Through typical repression with the homosexual and heterosexual fixation, the masochistic-sadistic impulses achieve a further development in another sense. Under the influence of the existing special posture of the woman, which for the unconscious comes to furnish for the concepts "masculine" and "feminine" the symbols of a mastery-and-subjection relationship, the tendency toward self-subjection in the male, and the tendency toward the preservation of personality and the will-to-power in the female, necessarily come to find their symbolical expression by means of the homosexual motive. Therewith the masochistic-sadistic complex develops into two typical force-pairs, one for each sex; in the male, heterosexual sadism and passive homosexuality; in the female, heterosexual masochism and active homosexuality.

This notice is not the place for either confirmation of or attack on these theories of Gross's. There is too much concentrated thinking in these theses; they must be carefully tested. We are grateful to the author for so much that is stimulating, and we hope that he will succeed in demonstrating the truth of his assertions with more abundant analytical evidence. Without in the least wishing to reflect on their originality, I am glad to affirm that his ideas are in many respects in contact with my own, as I have set them forth in my book "Onanism and Homosexuality."

Of unusual quality is the second essay, "Concerning Isolation" (Ueber Einsamkeit). It treats of the significance that love has for children, and makes the demand: "Love must be given the child absolutely, without conditions, freed of every, even if only apparent, connection with conditions of whatever sort, as a pure life-encouraging affirmation of the individuality for the sake of its own worth and for each budding peculiarity." The third essay deals with "The Problem of Insanity" (Problem des Wahnes), confirms Freud's discovery of repressed homosexuality in the psychogenesis of paranoia, and enriches this thought with new and very fruitful suggestions and experiences.

In all, a profound work, one that contrasts favorably with the stereotyped monotony of recent psychanalytic literature which in great

measure is dedicated solely to the confirmation of the Freudean doctrines. Gross is an individuality; he speaks of material that he has made his own. Such talk is always significant and worth while.

W. STEKEL. (G. F. S.)

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**DR. OSKAR PFISTER: Ein neuer Zugang zum alten Evangelium.** [A new approach to the Old Gospel.] Gütersloh, 1918. (C. Bartelsmann.)

Dr. Pfister, the Zurich pastor who is so widely and favorably known for his basic psychanalytic studies in a number of fields, and especially for his success in the practical application of psychanalysis to spiritual welfare work, is a master not only of the intricacies of psychanalytic theory and the delicacies of its technique, but also of the art of presenting a difficult subject-matter to a wide circle of readers in a way that makes it possible even for the uninitiated to acquire with relatively little effort an idea of the essence of the matter and the desire to come to closer grips with it. These varied powers, which supplement one another so happily, are again brilliantly manifest in one of his latest books, "A New Approach to the Old Gospel." This title in itself is highly characteristic. The reader is presented with much material drawn from the practice of our psychanalytic pastor and comes to appreciate the beauty of his calling: and that, too, is characteristic of Pfister, for in all his work the element of beauty is gratefully present. Perhaps it is because there is a large share of the painter in him that he is so fond of making use of artistic productions (drawings, paintings) in the analysis of his patients; and it is indeed amazing to see how much these pictures (some of which are reproduced) reveal of the psychic life of those thus analysed. On the basis of some personal investigations in this direction, I can confirm his findings fully. But let us consider a moment the author's view of the nature of his most important task:

Pastoral authority is often of no avail with neurotics and those suffering with emotional disturbances. "I speak of people who are frequently healthy, in the medical sense, and who turn to their pastor occasionally for advice in matters that may seem to have no connection with nervousness, but are rather religious or moral difficulties. For example, the difficulty may involve hallucinations of holy or unholy beings, or religious apprehensions, such as a dread of the sin against the Holy Ghost. The difficulty may involve a religious compulsion: the compulsion to interpolate a negative in a prayer for the parents so that the prayer becomes a curse; or it may be that the religious sentiment has suddenly vanished without ostensible cause. Or longings for Catholic ritual—striking and repugnant in a Protestant milieu—may make their appearance, yearnings which the reason renounces, but which emotion urges with tremendous power; or else some mysterious inner force demands conversion to a bizarre sect. Even in cases involving religious matters, little or no progress can be made with arguments based on reason, and in these cases such arguments serve merely to evoke counter-arguments so threadbare that it is immediately clear that not they are responsible for these religious convictions. In many a case involving ethical material, the subconscious origin of the difficulty is still more apparent, as in the sudden appearance of kleptomania, as, for example,

in the case of a girl in good circumstances who one day experienced an almost irresistible and very desperate compulsion to rob a poor-box; or in cases of hatred for certain unknown persons, or in the sudden disappearance of love for humankind, and in a thousand other phenomena of the moral consciousness."

And what is the goal of this spiritual psychanalysis? "The harmonizinig and spiritualizing of a personality injured by wasteful expenditure of energy on the unconscious." In a number of uncommonly instructive examples Pfister shows concretely the nature and the effectiveness of psychanalysis in the hands of the spiritual worker. He does not neglect to present, along with the analytic, the synthetic element as well, demonstrating the transition from psychanalysis to psychopedagogy. An important principle is formulated in the following terms: "In most instances, the neurotic symptom signifies a flight from the duty demanded by the innermost nature of the personality and by the given circumstances. It is easier and more pleasant to luxuriate in a devotion to the Madonna **(Madonnenminne)** than to establish an ethical relation with the mother." To be sure, all symptoms do not conform to this principle, significant as it may be to the spiritual worker. For his chief concern will doubtless be the liberation of the ethical.

Our author has much to say that is peculiarly his own about the province he has made his own, the adaptation of psychanalytic work to the spirit of the Gospels. He holds that a mere analyst would be "but a plowman, not a sower, only a forerunner or pathfinder, not a bringer of healing. From the time that the healing conception takes possession of the whole personality, so that no spiritual province of importance remains cut off from consciousness, there is nothing left for analysis to do." At this point, construction begins; the spiritual worker (and many another, too, to his great gain) finds the models for this reconstruction in the "Old Gospel" to which this "New Approach" points the way.

H. S. (G. F. S.)

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**Theodore Reik: Psychoanalytische Studien zur Bibelexegese,** [Psychanalytic Contributions to Biblical Exegesis.] Imago, 1919, Vol. V., Nos. 5-6.

Many students of the Bible have pondered the puzzling passage describing Jacob's contest with God. With the help of psychanalysis Reik attempts a solution. All analytic studies suffer from one-sidedness. We can predict Reik's conclusion in advance: Jacob struggled with his father; the story represents a form of the castration-complex, of which circumcision is the vestigial remnant persisting among the Jews. As it seems to me, the story relates a struggle with the self, with the divine, that at the same time is the daemonic (the devil). And this devil is—homosexuality. It is to be regretted that Reik has not considered this possibility.

STEKEL. ( G. F. S.)

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**Rudwin, Maximilian J.: The Origin of the German Carnival Comedy.** New York: G. E. Stechert & Co., 1920.

The purpose of this book is to show the secular development of the Carnival comedy from its earliest beginnings to its culmination in the **Fastnachtsspiele** of Hans Sachs. It is usually supposed that the

broad and rough comedy of contemporary manners was developed out of the farcical episodes introduced into the early religious plays or mysteries. Dr. Rudwin presents an alternative. A ceremony of blessing the fields in order to make them fruitful was performed by leading a ship on wheels about them in solemn procession. This ship had no relation to the sea, but was a symbol of femininity and hence of productivity,—a symbol common among all primitive races. Women (and, later, men dressed as women) conducted this ceremony; for men hunted and worshipped the heavens, while women tilled the soil and carried on earth-worship. The heaven-father had his counterpart in the earth-mother. In addition to this ceremony were other charms intended to make the earth productive. These were based on the principle of similarity but were equally symbolic—the burning or burying in effigy of Death or Winter, the bringing in of Summer by a tree or branch procession, and the like. In all these we see the elements of drama, for the leaf-clad mummer is impersonating the spirit of vegetation.

But Dr. Rudwin arouses our interest under false pretenses; for after devoting a third of his book to a careful and detailed account of these early practices he tells us that neither the ship-procession nor these mystic rites could have issued in drama. He then considers the dance, especially the sword-dance and morris-dance, and, while dwelling on the close connection of dance and drama, arrives again at a negative conclusion. There is no evidence that the dance "ever took on comic elements and attempted the portrayal of contemporary life, which is the very essence of the Carnival plays."

But the Carnival Fool became the actor, and by his buffoonery gave rise to the Carnival plays. The actors with faces blackened to take the part of demons were regarded as clowns and supplied the comic element in the mythical drama. But having separated the Carnival plays so carefully from the contemporary religious mysteries, Dr. Rudwin admits that the two types of mediaeval drama could not have existed side by side without influencing each other. He shows some of their borrowings back and forth—the use of religious themes in the Carnival plays, the employment of Carnival devices in the mysteries. This only illustrates the difficulty of attempting a logical reconstruction without sufficient basis in fact. Dr. Rudwin says, "It is probable that the secular pieces in their literary form were posterior to the sacred plays. They may even have been modelled after them." Now if none of the secular predecessors of the Carnival plays—the ship-procession, the magical rites, the dance—could have given rise to actual drama, it is straining the point to find a secular origin merely in the antics of the Carnival Fool. We have no reason for not believing still that the comic episodes of the mystery plays gave rise to the secular drama.

Dr. Rudwin does not note the similarity of the Carnival Fool and the part he played in creating comedy to the Vice of the English moralities, a direct descendant of the mystery-play devil, though this would furnish so interesting an analogy. An instance where blackened or masked demons are regarded as clowns and supply the "comic relief" of the piece is still to be found in the "Play of the Pastores" in Mexico. Both of these, of course, show a character corresponding to the Carni-

val Fool, "phallic demons" and masked mummers upon which Dr. Rudwin bases his theory of a secular origin for the Carnival plays. Dr. Rudwin cites many correspondences in these plays to classic and Oriental drama, as well as to the drama of primitive peoples. It is ungracious where so much is given to ask for more; but in discussing the sword-dance in its relation to the origin of drama, one might wish that he had made mention of the Song of Songs. Here is possibly an instance of how the central feature of "the king's week" became the climax of a drama built about it. Dr. Rudwin says, "It is hard to imagine the process by which a literary drama could evolve out of a sword-dance." The Song of Songs may perhaps be an illustration of just that.

In spite of the fact that his central contention must be regarded as not proven, Dr. Rudwin's book is well worth reading. It is a full and orderly discussion of the subject, wholly free from bias, and a definite contribution to scholarship.* **G.**

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**Schroeder, Theodore: The Psychologic Aspect of Free Association.** (Reprint). The American Journal of Psychology, July, 1919 3° 260-273.

This prolific writer has rendered psa. a distinct service in this simple and clear exposition, by means of the analysis of some dozen words set down on a sheet of paper at random, of the fundamentals of our science. There is still great need for such essays even in professedly scientific psychological and medical journals. It was a very happy thought of the author's to combine his random words into an improvised dream and thus also illustrate the principles of dream analysis. We are quite in accord with him too when he says "that much of the misunderstanding about psa is due to the analysts' shortcomings as controversialists." To ignore our critics is more often due to an inability to meet their objections and a fear of exposing ourselves to attack than to a valid conviction of the futility of a reply.

S. A. T.

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**Wall, O. A., M. D. Sex and Sex Worship (Phallic Worship).** St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Co., 1919.Pp. xv-607. $7.50.

**Brown, Sanger, M. D.. The Sex Worship and Symbolism of Ancient Races.** Boston: R. G. Badger, 1916. Pp. 145. $3.00.

Now that the subject of sex has been brought within the scope of legitimate investigation, there has recently developed a great body of literature which aims to inquire into sex as a motive in individual and racial development. The two most recent books on the subject are the titles placed at the head of this notice. Dr. Wall's book is, with but one exception—the recent revised German version of Dulare's scholarly work—the most comprehensive book on this subject. The author has amassed a great wealth of material, and has traced the survivals of ancient sex-worship in myth, tradition, institution and custom. The whole work is inspired by a great love of truth, beauty and sanity. Dr. Wall shows deep sympathy with liberal thought in

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*It is to be regretted that our reviewer has failed to point out and stress one of Dr. Rudwin's main theses: that the Carnival comedy, like

religion, art and life. His book, however, is, sad to say, slightly marred by a few foolish jokes and filthy stories. As he fails, for reasons adduced in the Preface, to give the sources of the material he has collected, his book is not well adapted for scientific work. But the little volume of Dr. Brown is still less adapted for this purpose. Although this author does not fail to give the sources on which he has drawn, he systematically omits the pagination, and often even satisfies himself with the title without mentioning the author. The bibliography in the one book as well as in the other does not bear testimony to a faculty of discrimination on the part of the author. In both bibliographies the titles are not supplied with the date and place of their publication. The best passages of Dr. Brown's book, which, by the way, first appeared in part in the "Journal of Abnormal Psychology" for 1915-1916, are those quoted from other works. As a matter of fact, it is but a jumble of disconnected quotations. The book by Dr. Brown is the worst piece of workmanship that has come off the press for some time. However, since the passages of value in this book have been taken from works which are for the most part out of print, and, for most readers, out of reach, Dr. Brown's little volume will probably find a sale.

The chief fault with most writers on this subject is that they exaggerate the importance of sex as a determining factor in the evolution of the religious idea of man. Pre-occupation with a subject constitutes a great danger for men who have had no scientific training, and this has been the case with the greatest number of writers on this subject. It is to be regretted that our ethnologists and folklorists have left this field of investigation almost wholly to medical men. The sanest presentation of this subject is the article "Phallism" in Hasting's "Encyclopaedia of Religion and Athics," ix (1917), 827ff., by R. S. Hartland, the author of "The Legend of Perseus." To the excellent bibliography appended to the article may be added the popular essay written by the well-known German student of comparative religion Th. Achelis "Phallische Gebräuche und Kulte" in the Frankfort periodical "Sexual Probleme" for 1919. **R.**

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# Varia

**SILBERER, H. Some Little Half-sleep Experiences.**

**A. Hypnopompic.** Hallucinations of the sleep-waking state are classified as 'hypnogogic,' i. e., those leading sleep in, and 'hypnopompic,' i. e., those leading sleep away. Thus, hypnogogic hallucinations occur when we fall asleep, hypnopompic when we wake up. So much by way of terminology. And now for a few illustrations:

**Circumstances:** I am lying abed, and am wakened by a knocking at the door. I am very sleepy, and continue lying in bed in a light dose. Suddenly I become aware of the following

**Hallucinatory Image:** I wrap a cloak about me, pay a bill (as one does in a restaurant or a store), and take my departure. I am dimly aware that the cloak is my bath-robe.

**Explanation:** A combination of "threshold-symbolism" and "convenience-dream." ("Threshold-symbolism" is a term I have suggested for those symbols which express a shifting or a crossing of the threshold

of consciousness—such a process, e. g., as that involved in falling asleep or in awaking). The departure—putting on the cloak and paying the bill are part of the action—is a pictorial representation of waking. I take leave of sleep. I have discharged my debt to nature (paid the bill). —The convenience-element in the dream consists in the fact that instead of being any arbitrary cloak it is precisely my bath-robe that I make use of: I had been summoned to get up and take my bath, and so to put on my bath-robe; for my greater convenience, since I want to loaf awhile longer in bed, the dream presents this as wish-fulfilment, as something that hes already been attended to.

**B. Hypnopompic,** but more like a dream than A.

**Circumstances:** A chronic naso-pharyngeal catarrh disturbs mv sleep. First I awake in the middle of the night and apply vaseline to alleviate the burning sensation caused by the mucus. Then I fall asleep again. Because of the catarrh, some sounds (which were really very slight) wake me at seven o'clock in the morning, i. e., an hour and a quarter before my usual time. But I doze off again, and so alternate between sleep and waking. I become conscious of the following

**Dream-like Scene:** In the right-half of my field of vision a glowing fly or mosquito, that has obviously been burning and the body of which is just like a glowing match, alights on a wall, and I express astonishment that the creature should be able to fly in such a condition. I have an unpleasant sensation; I am also aware of a certain aversion to the creature.

**Interpretation:** I feel the burning of my nose; it seems as bothersome as a fly (an insect I find very annoying); I am astonished that in this (catarrhal) condition I am able to fly (i. e., according to a common symbolism: breathe) and live (live in my dream, i. e., sleep), without waking and easing my discomfort by the use of mentholated-vaseline. Obstinacy of the catarrh—ineradicability of flies.

**Determining Details:** The previous evening I had had a conversation about the importance of treating a nasal catarrh in time lest it become **ineradicable.**—In the right half of my field of vision is a window; at the time of the dream it was already admitting some light. This shimmer was employed as a sensory basis for the dream-structure.

**C. Hypnogogic,**—evening.—before falling asleep. An earlier instance, appended in explanation of B.

**Circumstances:** I am abed with a cold. Head feels "stuffed." dull pain, feverish feeling.

**Picture:** Before me a matchbox, upside-down, i. e., all the heads of the matches are on the bottom.

**Interpretation:** The heads of the matches refer to my head. I feel inflamed (on fire, **entzündet**), hence the matches (**Zündhölzer**, fire sticks), in the heads of which too there is a latent fire which can break out, just as the apprehended contagious disease (influenza) may develop in me. The matches are in a wooden box; my head, too, feels "wooden," "boarded up" ("mit Brettern vernagelt"). The matches stand with their heads down; I feel as though I were standing on my head (congestion).* **(G. S.)**

*This whole passage is really untranslatable, since it turns both on puns and on a proverbial expression.—Tr.